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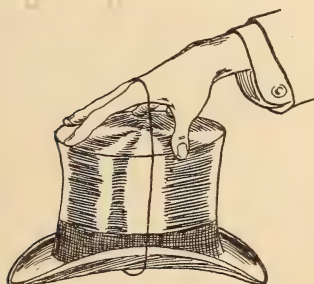
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LATER MAGIC

BY

PROFESSOR HOFFMANN

AUTHOR OF "MODERN MAGIC," "MORE MAGIC," ETC.



WITH 220 ILLUSTRATIONS

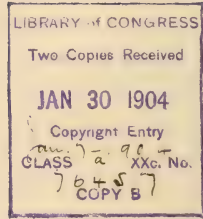
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PREFACE.

IN producing yet another volume on Magic, I have to offer my best thanks to the many conjurers, professional and otherwise, who have kindly communicated to me good things of their own, and given me permission to use them. To my friends Hartz and David Devant, and, among amateurs, to Mr. C. O. Williams, of Cardiff, I owe a special debt of gratitude in this particular.

I have further to record my great obligation to Messrs. Hamley Brothers, the oldest and best-known firm of London dealers, for much useful information, and for valuable assistance in the way of lending apparatus for illustration.

The editors of *Mahatma* and *Die Zauberwelt* kindly placed the contents of their columns at my disposal, and I have freely availed myself of their courtesy. Where the author of a given trick is known, I have given him the credit of the invention, but the discovery in such cases of the real Simon Pure is not always an easy matter. Till a conjuring trick has become a success, nobody cares who invented it, but let it once "catch on," and there are half a dozen claimants for the honour. If, therefore, I have unwittingly wronged any one in this particular, I trust he will accept my apology.

My original idea was to make this work cover the whole field of conjuring, but I speedily found that it would be unwise to attempt to do so. Magical material has accumulated to such an enormous extent during the last few years as to make it impossible to deal with it adequately within the compass of a single volume.¹ No doubt a trick may be described, after a fashion, in half a page. Indeed, this is too often done in magazine articles, wherein a trick is explained just far enough to gratify the curiosity of the reader,—and to spoil his enjoyment of it for the future. But a conjuring trick so described is like an air picked out with one finger on the piano. To give it artistic value it needs harmonious setting (in other words, a carefully arranged *mise en scène*), and a suitable accompaniment, represented by the “patter” of the performer. To pursue the simile still further, there are often several variations on the same theme, each of which is equally deserving of being recorded. To do full justice to a single trick, therefore, instead of half a page, half a dozen may be needed.

Having therefore to elect between dealing with the whole subject superficially or a part thoroughly, I finally decided for the latter alternative. I have no intention, however, of leaving my work incomplete. The present volume has taken over two years to compile; but some months of that time were devoted to the classification and indexing of material, much of

¹ When *Modern Magic* was written, the price-list of Messrs. Hamley (who were then, as now, the principal English makers of conjuring apparatus) consisted of a single slip of paper about fourteen inches long. At the present day their catalogue comprises over a hundred double-column pages, and contains more than a thousand items.

which I have not been able to make any present use of. If life and health permit, I hope to make an early beginning upon a further volume, dealing with the subjects unavoidably omitted in this one.

LOUIS HOFFMANN.

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L'ENVOI

INTRODUCTION.

TIME flies! The remark is scarcely original, but it forces itself upon me when I realize that over five and twenty years have passed away since I first took pen in hand to discourse of *Modern Magic*, and more than ten since its sequel, *More Magic*, was written.

And while Time has been flying, Magic has not lagged behind. The Art of Deception, like other arts, has made vast strides during the last quarter of the dead century. Indeed, probably at no time in the world's history has so much thought and ingenuity been brought to bear upon this subject. New and brilliant illusions have been devised, new sleights and improved methods have been invented, and old tricks have been so rejuvenated as to be practically new. The present volume is designed to give a brief account of the latest novelties and the most up-to-date methods in some of the leading departments of Magic, and, so far as those departments are concerned, to enable the conjurer of the twentieth century to start fully equipped, in point of knowledge, in the race for celebrity.

I have availed myself of this opportunity to meet in some degree the wishes of the many correspondents who have from time to time begged for "more patter." It is a request with which I am not in complete sym-

pathy, for I hold that a conjurer, if he has the true artistic spirit, will not be content to wear borrowed plumes. The technique of his art he may well acquire from others, but there his indebtedness should end. No mere copy, even of the most perfect original, can ever claim first rank as a work of art. The outline of the trick the wizard may fairly borrow, but the *mise en scène* should be all his own.

Originality in this respect is the more desirable, because the same form of words which comes easily and gracefully from one man may be utterly out of character in the mouth of another. We have it on the authority of Shakespeare that a giant's robe sits uncomfortably on a dwarfish thief, and the giant would scarcely be more at his ease in the garments of the dwarf. Borrowed patter is like a borrowed dress-suit,—more than likely to be a misfit.

I find, however, that many beginners, and some even of the more advanced, though they may be able to master the mechanical requirements of a given feat, find it difficult to supply the needful dramatic element; they lack the creative power which clothes the dry bones, and gives them life. As an assistance to such weak brethren, I have set down in full the patter adopted by myself or others in connection with sundry tricks of special interest. Several varieties of style will be found here illustrated.

LATER MAGIC

LATER MAGIC

CHAPTER I.

I N commencing a new book on Magic, I find myself constrained to go once more to some extent over ground I have already trodden. But though the ground is the same, the landscape is altered. As in cities, so in conjuring, the vacant spaces are gradually built upon. There are many regions which formerly might have been disposed of in a few words, but which now afford abundant material for description. The reader will forgive me, therefore, if I hark back for a brief space to a subject already discussed in my earlier volumes, viz.:

THE CONJURER'S DRESS

AND CONTRIVANCES IN CONNECTION THEREWITH.

It is one of the consequences of having a reputation as a conjurer, that one must be prepared to support it, so to speak, in season and out of season. The amateur in particular is liable to be called upon to "show a few tricks" at a moment's notice, and it may be on occasions when his often repeated boast of "no preparation" is a painful reality. Fortunately, such calls

most frequently arise at festive gatherings, where evening dress is the prevailing costume, and evening dress is the proof armour of the modern conjurer. Sundry special features of a conjurer's dress-suit were noted in *Modern Magic*, and so far as it goes, the description is still correct. But the magician of the twentieth century in this, as in many other directions, has improved considerably upon his predecessor of the last generation.

To give the reader an idea of the extent to which the wizard's war-paint may be "faked" for the purpose of

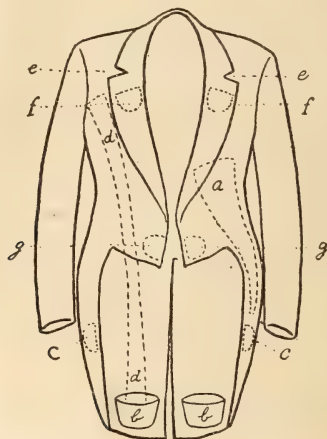


FIG. 1.

his art, his attention is invited to the accompanying diagrams (Figs. 1, 2, 3), which illustrate some of the numerous possibilities in this particular.

THE COAT.

Every conjurer is familiar with the ordinary loading-pocket within the breast of the coat. In *a* (Fig. 1) we

have another form. The pocket (which may be duplicated on the opposite side) is in this case made to extend downwards to the waist, or even further, tapering as it goes. Its object is to hold a folding bouquet, a plume of feathers, or other article of greater length than breadth. In some cases the mouth of the pocket is enlarged by laying it open down one side for a few inches, to facilitate the production of the object. *b b* are the usual *profondes*, and *c c* are *pochettes* (of rather doubtful utility) under the tail of the coat, one on each side, and having vertical openings. In addition to these are the regular tail-pockets, opening on the outside and used without disguise for the ordinary purposes of pockets.

The letters *d d* represent a special pocket, opening under the armpit, a little above the breast pocket, and continued downwards through the whole length of the coat, being in fact a mere tube of silk, discharging at the bottom into the *profonde*, so that any object of suitable size and weight, say a watch, placed ostensibly in the breast pocket, at once secretly slips down into the *profonde*. Some performers have the upper openings of these pockets made on the *outside* of the coat, under the armpits, the article being in this case secretly slipped into the pocket under cover of the act of drawing back the coat sleeve.

Even the coat collar has its magical uses. The outer edge of the upper part (the portion which goes round the neck) is sewn to the coat, forming a tubular pocket designed for the reception of a silk handkerchief. The ends, *e e*, are open, and an inch length of black silk thread, attached to the corner of the handkerchief, with a black bead at the free end, enables the performer

to draw it out when desired, this being done under cover of his own body, while his back is turned to the audience. Under each lapel may be a minute pochette, *ff*, very handy for receiving a coin, a small glass ball, or a pack of "diminishing" cards. A "clip," suspended on either side, may be used, either in substitution for the little pochette, or as auxiliary thereto. Two additional pockets of small size are sometimes inserted at the points *gg*. These may either open vertically, or have the mouth downward, in which latter case they conceal a clip for holding a coin.

THE VEST.

From the coat we pass to the vest. This offers, from its smaller size, less scope for adaptation, but its

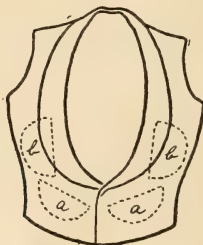


FIG. 2.

magical uses are still considerable. In addition to the everyday pockets on the outside, and the customary elastic band sewn round the inside of the waist¹ to facilitate what is known as "vesting" (*i.e.*, concealing articles under the front edge), sundry special pockets may be introduced. Thus *aa* (see Fig. 2) are two

¹ Many experts dispense with the elastic band, substituting for it three elastic gussets, shaped like an inverted Δ , one over each

semi-circular pockets just within the breast, adapted for the reception of small fish-bowls or the like. Outside, at the back, on a flap suspended from the waist, may be a couple of similar pockets. Inside the breast are two smaller pockets, *bb*, opening vertically. (Similar pockets may be placed outside, but in such case the opening is brought somewhat nearer to the armpit.) And in front, just inside and above the waistband, may hang two or more clips for the reception of cards or coins.

THE TROUSERS.

These naturally have their share in the general sophistication. A leather sheath, *a* (see Fig. 3), down either leg, provides a resting-place for the staff of a flag, a Japanese sunshade, or other lengthy object. A loose-mouthed pocket, *b*, on either hip, placed somewhat farther forward than the customary pistol-pocket, forms a capital receptacle for articles to be vanished. Some performers use a single pocket, about nine inches in width and seven in depth, lying over the central portion of the loins, with a vertical opening on each side. A pocket of this kind will be found extremely useful for many tricks. For card-conjuring, this may be replaced by a couple of oblong pockets, opening vertically at the side, and designed each to hold a prepared pack of cards in a

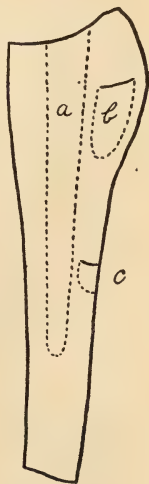


FIG. 3.

hip and one in centre of back. The lowermost button and button-hole should in any case be brought as low down as possible, and a hook and eye may be added at the extreme bottom corners.

horizontal position, about an inch of the cards projecting.

Further, the outer seam down either leg, a little above the knee, is frequently opened for about an inch in two or three places; the openings (which are invisible when the performer stands up) being in fact the mouths of tiny pockets destined for the reception of small silk handkerchiefs, fitted as described on page 3, to be produced, as the doctors say, *pro re natâ*. A couple of rubber bands, attached inside the trouser-leg, just above the boot, may form a temporary abiding-place for half a dozen playing cards, to be "passed" there in the course of a performance *à la* Thurston.

With the pochettes situate behind the leg at *c*, the reader is doubtless already acquainted, these having formed part of the equipment of the conjurer ever since the days of Robert-Houdin. They may be larger or smaller, according to the particular purpose they are intended to serve, and it is feasible (and sometimes very useful) to have a small pocket sewn on the outside of a larger one.

Apropos of pochettes, by the way, I must not omit to note a little appliance of recent invention, in the shape of a removable pochette. This is in appearance as shown in Fig. 4. It is of black cloth, stretched on a wire frame which keeps its mouth always open, and is hooked to the back of the trouser-leg, or elsewhere as may be desirable, by means of bent pins, soldered to the frame. It is large enough to receive a pack of cards, a watch, or a small-sized billiard ball.

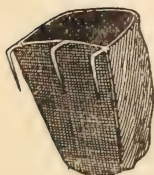


FIG. 4.

These pochettes are more particularly designed for the use of the amateur, who, performing only occasionally, may not care to encumber his dress suit with the regular pochettes of the professional conjurer.

Reverting to pockets proper, *i. e.*, forming part of the actual garment, I may mention a somewhat exceptional pocket which, where circumstances admit of its use, will be found extremely valuable. It is only available where the performer has the command of a stage of his own, with an accessible space below it, and its object is to secretly "pass off" borrowed articles to an assistant below. Opening on the right or left hip, just above the ordinary pochette, it consists of a simple flat tube of silk, two and a half inches wide, open at each end, and extending right down the trouser-leg. To use it, an opening, three inches long and one and a half wide, must be cut in the stage, and hidden from the view of the spectators by the foot of a small round table or *guéridon*, placed just in front of it. Below the opening is suspended a small net. Obviously, if the performer stands in a suitable position beside or behind the table, and drops, say, a watch, into the mouth of the pocket, it will travel down the tube, through the hole, and into the net. It is, however, essential that the position of the foot be absolutely correct, as otherwise the watch might fall *on* the stage instead of through it, with results unpleasant to all parties. The right position is secured by having three wire nails driven into the floor, with the last half-inch (or less) of their length projecting above it, one for the back of the heel, the others for the outer edge of the boot to rest against. With these as guides, the performer can

in a moment ascertain by feel the exact position for the due working of the arrangement. If it is desired afterwards to move the table, the hole can be closed by the assistant from below by a hinged trap, secured by a turn-button. The best form for the net is conical, as by adopting this shape the shock of the fall (in any case very slight) is reduced to a minimum.

It is hardly necessary, I presume, to caution the reader against supposing that the garments of even the most thoroughgoing professional are provided with *all* the special appliances I have mentioned. Complication naturally leads to confusion. The best plan, and the one usually adopted, is to start with only the regulation *pochettes* and *profondes*; and as the performer enlarges his programme, to add such other conveniences as he may find needful for the presentation of new items.

THE SHIRT-CUFFS.

The sleeve has from time immemorial had the credit of being an accomplice of the conjurer, but hitherto no breath of suspicion has tarnished the white surface of the shirt-cuff. Its good name is, however, no longer entirely deserved, for the ingenuity of the up-to-date wizard has pressed even the innocent wrist-band into the service of deception.

The conjurer is about to vanish, say, some small object. That there may be no question of "up his sleeve," he bares his arms to the elbow, first, however, removing his shirt-cuffs, which are of the detachable kind, and placing them carelessly (?) on the table, the one standing on end, the other lying down, so that all can see through it. Having transferred the article to

be vanished (apparently) from his right hand to his left, he with the right hand puts the upstanding cuff a little to one side, as if merely to get it out of his way, and in so doing, secretly drops the palmed article therein. It is not heard to fall, neither is it seen on the table when the cuff is again picked up, but passes silently back into the possession of the performer.

There are two ways of adapting the shirt-cuff for this purpose. In the first, an oval flap is hinged to the stud which fastens the cuff, and by the pressure of a spring is impelled, when the cuff is not in use, to take the position shown in Fig. 5. When the cuff is in

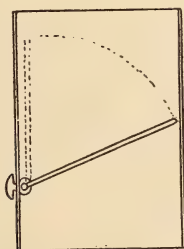


FIG. 5.

wear, the spring yields, and the flap lies flat against the side, as shown by the dotted lines in the same figure. With this explanation, the working of the arrangement becomes obvious. When the cuff is taken off and placed on the table, the flap, which is lined on the upper side with some soft woolly material, takes the position shown in the diagram, and the article drops into the cavity thus created. When the performer again picks up the cuff, he does so with the fingers inside and thumb outside, and so at once regains possession of the article.

The alternative mode of construction is a little more complicated. Round the inner circumference of the cuff, at its centre, is a band of thin brass. Pivotted to the button, which is of the solitaire kind, and to the opposite side of this band, is a half-ring of stiff wire, which, by giving a half-turn to the solitaire, may be brought to the one side or the other. To this half-ring, and to the opposite half of the circular band, is sewn a little cup-shaped worsted net. When the cuff is in wear, the stud is so turned as to throw the moveable semicircle over against that portion of the band to which the net is attached, in which condition the net lies flat against the side of the cuff, and presents no obstacle to the insertion of the wrist. When removed from the arm, a half-turn of the stud in the opposite direction expands the net, which is thereby spread across the whole of the internal space, and the apparatus becomes ready for use.

Before quitting the subject of the shirt-cuff, and by way of relief to the monotony of preliminary instructions, I may take the opportunity to describe a very effective little trick, in which the unprepared shirt-cuff plays a highly important, though unsuspected, part. The only conditions are that it must be of such a size as to slip easily over the hand, and that (as in the case of the mechanical shirt-cuff) it must be fastened, not by links, but by a single stud or solitaire, so that its shape when in use shall be cylindrical.

The effect of the trick is to vanish a glass of water from under a handkerchief. In the old method of producing this effect, as the reader is doubtless aware, the performer was obliged to use a special handker-

chief of his own, and a servante, in some shape, was necessary for the removal of the glass. In the form of the trick I am about to describe neither servante nor prepared handkerchief is necessary, the trick being performed literally without apparatus.

The performer, having borrowed a hat, places it on a table at some little distance. Then holding up in his right hand a tumbler three parts full of water, he announces that he is about to pass it into the hat, and asks whether he shall do so visibly or invisibly. Presumably with the idea that they will find out the more easily "how it's done," spectators always answer "visibly" to this question. "Good!" he says. With his left hand, he takes the glass, grasping it overhand (*i. e.*, with thumb and fingers encircling the rim from above, as in Fig. 6), and gently lowers it into the hat (at the



FIG. 6.

same time secretly letting the shirt-cuff slip over the hand, and settle down round the glass). There is a general laugh, the audience feeling that they have been "sold." "That's the way to do it visibly," he says; "simplest thing in the world,—you just drop the glass into the hat. Any foo—fellow, I mean,—can do that. Now I wil' do it invisibly, which you will find is a much

neater method. Will somebody lend me a handkerchief?"

A handkerchief having been procured, he spreads it over the hat, and then dipping the right hand into the hat (holding the hand in the same position as before) he brings up, apparently, the glass within the handkerchief. (See Fig. 7). As a matter of fact it is the



FIG. 7.

shirt-cuff only that he brings up therein, the glass remaining in the hat. With pretended precaution, as though afraid of spilling the water, he introduces the left hand under the handkerchief, as if to grasp the glass. In reality he passes the hand up within the cuff, taking care that the lower edge of the latter shall be fairly within the coat sleeve. Then saying, "One, two, three, go!" he lets the cuff sink down to its normal position, and with the right hand shakes out the handkerchief in the direction of the hat, where the glass of water is in due course found.

THE HAT.

One or two ways in which a tall hat may be adapted for magical use were noted in *More Magic*, but their

utility is discounted by the necessity of using the conjurer's own head-gear, a proceeding naturally giving rise to suspicion. The little appliance which I am about to describe is not open to that objection.



FIG. 8.

The apparatus in question (Fig. 8) consists of an oval disc of pasteboard, *a a* (in size a little less than the crown of a hat), to which is attached, by means of a hinge of cloth or leather, an upright partition, *b*. Though shown upright in the diagram, this partition normally lies flat on *a a*, folding at pleasure either way. The whole apparatus is best covered with black silk, in order to diminish friction. In its flat condition it is tucked under the performer's vest. In returning with

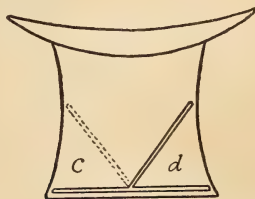


FIG. 9.

a borrowed hat to his table, he introduces the "fake"; *a a* adapting itself to the shape of the crown, while *b*, having no longer room to lie flat, rests in a sloping

position against the back or front, as shown in the sectional view, Fig. 9. The hat is thus divided into two compartments, *c*, *d*, which will be open or closed, according as *b* is tilted to the one side or the other.

Any light object being now placed in the hat naturally falls into the side for the time being open (in the diagram, *c*). When the performer, in the course of the trick, desires to show that the object has disappeared, he has only to tilt *b* over to the opposite side as shown by the dotted line (closing *c* and opening *d*). He then grasps the hat with the fingers inside (thereby keeping *b* in position) and turns it over, the fact that nothing falls out being proof positive, according to conjurer's logic, that the hat is empty. By reversing the process, the article may be made to return to the hat, or, by slightly modifying the procedure, one article may be "changed" to another.

It may be worth while here just to mention another change by means of a hat, which was used by the late Dr. Lynn in connection with a "dove" trick. The dove, wrapped in paper, was changed, if I remember rightly, into a bouquet similarly covered. The bouquet parcel, enveloped in a wig, is placed under the left arm, inside the coat of the performer. This we will call parcel No. 1. He begins by asking the loan of two hats, and while the second is being handed up, "loads" the first with the wig and its contents. The wig he presently produces from it: the parcel contained therein remaining in the hat. The performer having, in the course of the trick, wrapped up the dove so as to form a similar parcel (this we will call parcel No. 2), places it in the same hat, while he asks a volunteer

assistant to hold it, with both hands, mouth upwards, on his head. Presently he tells the assistant that he has the wrong sort of head, and may perhaps be able to hold the parcel better without the hat. He accordingly takes out the parcel (really No. 1) and gets him to hold this on his head in place of the hat, which, with parcel No. 2, is put aside to be cleared by the assistant (under pretence of brushing and returning) at the first opportunity. After a little more patter the visible parcel is opened, and the contents are found to have changed in accordance with the intention of the trick.

The second hat is placed, when received from the lender, for a moment or two mouth downwards over the first. Of course this makes not the slightest difference, and this hat might very well be dispensed with, being merely borrowed to facilitate (by distracting the attention of the spectators) the loading of the first hat.

It can hardly be claimed for this change that it is highly artistic, but on the other hand it has the advantage of being remarkably easy.

CHAPTER II.

APPLIANCES AND EXPEDIENTS OF GENERAL UTILITY.

NOT only in the adaptation of his dress to magical ends, but in the greater variety of his tools, and in the ingenuity of his expedients, does the wizard of to-day "go better" than his compeer of the last century. Before proceeding to the description of specific tricks, I think I cannot do better than give some account of these more up-to-date devices.

VARIOUS FORMS OF THE "SERVANTE."

The tendency of modern conjuring is to do away, as far as possible, with the idea of mechanical aids. To that end, the wizard of to-day endeavours to avoid any suggestive appearance about his stage. The centre table, in particular, behind which the acute spectator had learnt to know or suspect the existence of a hidden receptacle, is no longer fashionable. But the servante, in some shape or other, is still a necessity, the only alternative to its use being an excessive amount of "pocket" business, which is quite as undesirable as too frequent retirement behind the table. Accordingly, the ingenuity of performers has been largely directed to the improvement or disguise of the servante, or the discovery of adequate substitutes for it.

BAG SERVANTES.

The idea of the "bag" or "net" servante, alluded to in *More Magic* (p. 6) as a novelty, as at that time it was, has since been developed to a remarkable extent. This class of servante is now produced in a host of different forms, as may be gathered from the annexed diagrams, representing a few only of its varieties. Figures 10 and 11 are designed to receive small articles



FIG. 10.

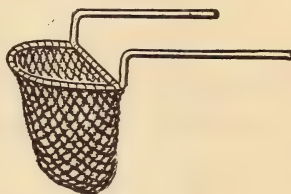


FIG. 11.

only, and are placed in position by thrusting the wire arms into small screw-eyes, fixed in the under side of the table top. As the screw-eyes have to be fixed beforehand, and as the average householder is apt to object to having gimlet-holes bored in his furniture, this method of fixing is practically restricted to tables



FIG. 12.

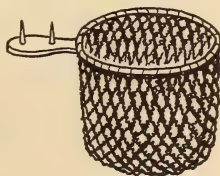


FIG. 13.

belonging to the performer himself, or to very accommodating friends. Fig. 12, which has a gimlet-pointed

screw of its own, is open to the same objection. A couple of needle-points¹ may however be pressed into

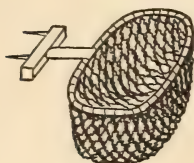


FIG. 14.

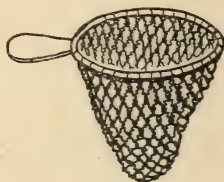


FIG. 15.

any hidden part of even the handsomest table without injuring it, and this is the mode of fixing adopted in the case of the servantes represented in Figs. 13 and



FIG. 16.

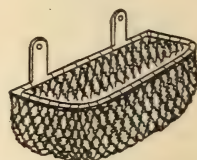


FIG. 17.

14. Fig. 15 is provided with a flat tongue, which may be thrust into the opening of a table drawer. Nos. 16

¹ It may be well to explain that the needle-points here referred to have no connection with sewing needles. They are of plain steel, eyeless, about two inches in length, and the thickness of a carpet needle. Their normal function (apart from conjuring) is the attachment of mouldings of wood or composition to picture frames and the like. A hole is first bored, with a fine awl, in the object to be affixed, and the needle-point is then driven by means of a hammer through the hole till it projects as far as need be for the specific purpose on the opposite side. So much as remains projecting of the butt end of the needle is then broken off flush with the surface of the wood. Needle-points are procurable in small packets of any ironmonger.

and 17 are adapted for attachment to the back of a chair, the former by means of hooks going over the back rail, the latter by pressing two needle-points or good-sized drawing-pins, through the holes shown in the upright slips, into the wood.

I have recently seen, at the depôt of Messrs. Hamley Brothers, a new form of portable servante, as illustrated in Fig. 18. Here *a a a a* represents an oblong

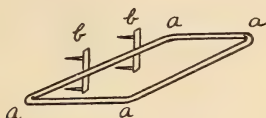


FIG. 18.

frame (about six inches by four) of stiff wire. To one of the larger sides of this are soldered two uprights, *b b*, two inches in height, and from each of these projects two needle-points, one at top, one at bottom. The two upper points should slope *very slightly downwards*, and should be first inserted in the wood, the lower points being then pressed home. A servante thus fixed will bear a very considerable amount of weight. To remove it the lower points must be drawn out first.

The open space between the four corners *a a a a* is filled by a tightly stretched piece of black calico, or woollen network. This is omitted in the diagram, because its insertion would have obscured the essential point, the mode of fixing.

Fig. 19 represents a chair servante specially adapted for "changing" a pack of cards. The prepared pack is held, as shown, in a spring clip. In the act of moving the chair backwards or forwards, the performer rests

his hand for a moment on the back. In that moment he drops the pack he has been using into the circular

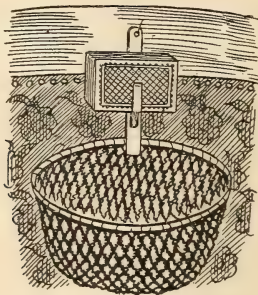


FIG. 19.

bag, and grasps in its place the prepared pack. A recent improvement consists in hingeing the ring of the bag to the clip, so that, when not in use, they may be folded together for greater portability.

THE "PREMIER" SERVANTE.

Figs. 20, 21, and 22 illustrate a new and ingenious form of chair servante, listed by Messrs. Hamley as

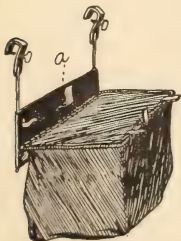


FIG. 20.

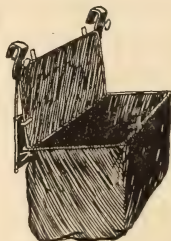


FIG. 21.



FIG. 22.

the "Premier." This has sundry special recommendations. It is of the "bag" variety; in shape oblong,

and made of black cloth, stretched on a wire frame. Its most striking feature is that the bag has a lid, also of cloth tightly stretched, which may be raised or lowered at pleasure. When lowered, as in Fig. 20, (thereby closing the bag), its upper surface in itself forms a flat servante, on which any article may be placed. When an object is to be got rid of by dropping, the "lid" is raised, as in Fig. 21, a catch keeping it from again falling, and so giving access to the "bag" portion. This servante can be raised or lowered relatively to the height of the back of the chair, and when not in use can be folded flat for packing, in which condition it takes the shape depicted in Fig. 22.

Where the chair used has an open back, it would seem impossible to adapt a servante to it, but the difficulty is only apparent. By throwing a shawl or large handkerchief over the back of the chair, the presence of the servante is effectually masked.

Apart from the "screw" and "hook" arrangements, there is another possible way of attaching a servante, which seems to me to have special recommendations, though I have not submitted it to sufficient practical test to be able to speak with absolute confidence as to its value. I refer to the "sucker" arrangement so frequently used for suspending light articles to the inside of shop windows. This is a little red rubber cup, to the outside of which is attached a hook. The rubber, previously moistened, is pressed against the glass, so as to force out the air from within, when it remains firmly attached, being maintained by atmospheric pressure. The same thing happens if it is pressed against any highly polished surface, as, for instance, the

back of a chair, or the frame of a table. I should not be disposed to rely on a single sucker, but to fix two of them into a little wooden slab, measuring say three by one and one half inches, and an inch thick. The screw or needle-point of the servante might then be inserted in this (or the servante attached directly to it); one or more of such slabs being used, and so placed as might be most suitable for the particular purpose.

It will be seen later on that the pneumatic sucker has been made useful to conjurers in other ways, but I am not aware that any one has yet used it for the support of the servante.

Where a glass filled with water has to be got rid of, the "bag" is made of India rubber or other waterproof material, while in other cases the bag portion of the servante is dispensed with altogether; as, for instance, where the object to be supported is a billiard-ball or cannon-ball, when what is known as a "ring" servante (see A in Fig. 23) of appropriate size is all that is



FIG. 23.

necessary. In billiard-ball tricks an open ring, as B in the same figure, is preferable, the ball being more easily got hold of. To ensure noiselessness in use, the ring should be covered with some soft material.

In some cases the object needs only to be suspended, in which case a hook, preferably of the kind known as

a cup-hook (Fig. 24) may answer the purpose. Two of such hooks fixed at an appropriate distance will serve



FIG. 24.

to support an object of considerable length; ranging from a wand to a sunshade or umbrella. Or, in place of hooks, the article may be supported on a straight pin or pins, fixed so as to slope slightly upwards. The outer end of the pin may be sharp or blunt, according to the purpose for which it is to be used. Thus, if it be desired to impale on it an orange, or a handkerchief rolled into a ball, the sharper it is, the better; if merely intended to hang something on by means of a loop, the point may be as blunt as you please.

As regards the mode of attachment, the pin or hook may either be fixed on a wooden base, from the opposite side of which project a couple of needle-points, to be pressed against the wood of the table or chair, as in Fig. 25, or the base may be of tin or thin brass with a couple

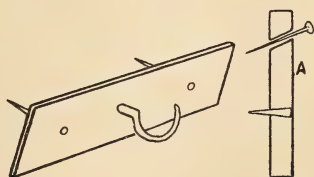


FIG. 25.

of small holes in it, as Fig. 26. A couple of good-sized drawing-pins are pressed through these holes into the

wood, and all is secure. Two converging pins, one above the other, as A in Fig. 25, make a still more substantial fixture.

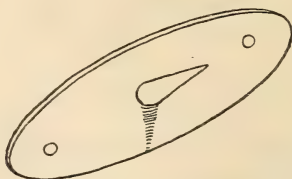


Fig. 26.

Where a light object is to be suspended by means of a loop of thread or wire, a drawing-pin, driven half-way home, will be all that is necessary to support it.

THE REVOLVING SERVANTE.

One of the latest ideas in this department is a "revolving" servante; the invention of Mr. Hal. Merton, an ingenious American performer. It is intended to form part of one of the familiar round tables, with fringed cover, frequently used as a side table. It is in three parts. A (see Fig. 27), is a small metal disc permanently attached to the under surface of the table-top, near its hinder edge, and having in its centre a female screw. B is a metal rod, with thread tapped to correspond at top, and a button at bottom. C is the servante proper, a circular disc of wood, three quarters of an inch thick, and ten inches, or thereabouts, in diameter, with a hole in its centre large enough to receive B. To fix it, B is passed through C, from below, and its upper end is screwed into A, the servante being thus suspended from above. It is obvious that when

the side for the time being projecting at the back has been utilized to produce or disappear a given object, a

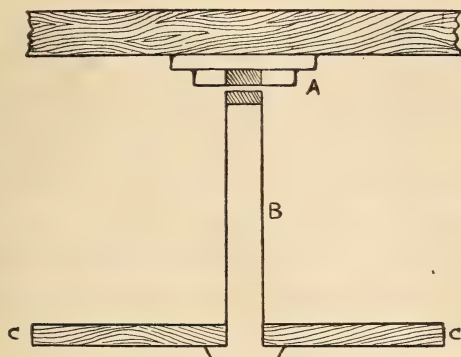


FIG. 27

mere touch will cause the servante to revolve to any desired extent, and so make a fresh portion of its surface available for use.

It is claimed for this servante that it has the advantage of combining an unusually large amount of working space with a very small amount of projection from the table. It has the further recommendation of being attached and removed with great facility. How far it will in other respects meet the test of practical experience has yet to be determined.

THE VEST SERVANTE.

The growing desire of performers to be independent of any special table, and at the same time the obvious objections to a too frequent recourse to pockets, almost naturally suggest the inquiry, "Cannot the open front of the vest be made available for the disappearance of small objects?" The first wizard to answer the

question in any practical way was, to the best of my belief, my friend Mr. David Devant, who invented and has used for many years past a very effective form of vest servante.

Mr. Devant's contrivance consists of an oblong plate of zinc, ten inches by seven, covered with cloth, and a tube of sheet-iron or gun-metal, four and one half inches long, pressed into an oval form, its longer diameter being four inches and its shorter two and one half inches. This is covered in like manner, and the cloth is continued below the tube to a depth of three inches, and closed at bottom, forming a bag wherein articles may fall noiselessly.

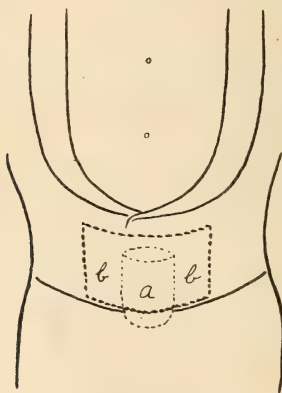


FIG. 28.

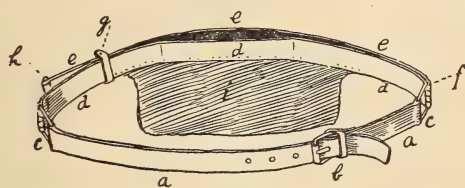
The plate is first placed in position, across the lower part of the shirt-front within the vest. This indeed may be worn all the evening without inconvenience. The tube is then inserted between this and the shirt-front, the lower part passing inside the waistband of the trousers. (See Fig. 28, in which the dotted lines show

the apparatus in position, *a* representing the tube, and *b b* the covered zinc plate. The slight abnormal projection of the vest attracts no inconvenient notice.)

Mr. Devant himself uses the appliance more particularly in connection with handkerchief tricks (to receive the false finger, or a rolled up handkerchief). But it is equally available for vanishing small balls, cards, or other articles of appropriate size.

Another form of vest servante is a speciality of Messrs. Hamley Brothers, who list it in their catalogue as "The Wonder of Wonders." It is in any case a very ingenious and well-thought-out appliance.

It consists of a belt one and a half inches in depth encircling the body under the vest. (See Fig. 29, giving



Closed
FIG. 29.

a view of the apparatus in its normal condition.) The hinder half, *a a*, of this belt is of leather, secured at back by a buckle, *b*. The forward half consists of two bands of nickelled steel, *d d d* and *e e e*, the latter lying in front of the former. *c c* are wire loops connecting the leather and the metal portions. *f* is a hinge, connecting the two steel bands, but allowing them to be separated at pleasure. *g* is a sleeve, holding them together at the opposite side, but allowing

eee to slide over *ddd*. The latter, which in use remains immovable, (practically forming part of a fixed belt), is slightly flattened in the centre. As the outer band is not thus flattened, there remains between them a space, plano-convex in shape, four inches in length by half an inch at its greatest breadth. By pushing the knob *h* towards the centre, the outer band is forced to assume a more decided convexity, at the same time diverging, throughout its length, from the inner band. The distance between them at the centre may be thus increased as far as the encircling garments will allow, say, up to two inches (see Fig. 30.) Sewn to

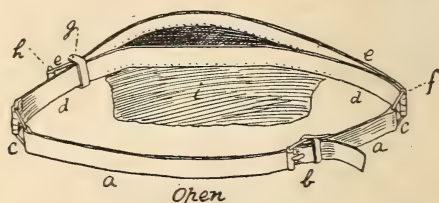


FIG. 30.

the lower edges of both bands, across a space of nine inches in width, is a shallow bag of black net, or silk, *i*, forming a receptacle for objects dropped within the vest. When the appliance has served its immediate purpose, a finger inserted under the vest at the left side draws back the knob *h*, and the outer band returns to its original unobtrusive condition.

THE CONJURER'S CIGAR-BOX.

As a substitute for the servante, and indeed for many of the purposes of the conjurer, a cigar-box will be found to be of material assistance, particularly in an *extempore* "show." So familiar an object excites no

suspicion, but the conjurer's cigar-box is not always quite so innocent at it looks. Herr Willmann, of Hamburg, a gentleman to whom the magical world is indebted for many useful inventions, has devised a cigar-box which, though of perfectly ordinary appearance, is in truth elaborately "faked" for the service of the conjurer (see Fig. 31). The very label on the lid is a delu-

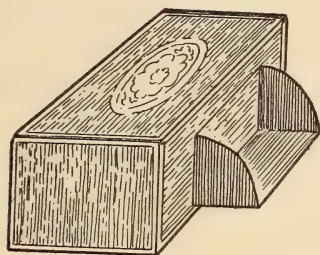


FIG. 31.

sion, being in fact a small trap, hinged at one end. Behind the box, if desired, is attached by means of a couple of needle-points, a net or other servante, and the interior of the box is padded so that any article passed through the trap shall make no noise in falling.

Another form of cigar-box is specially designed for "changing" small objects. The box has the bottom removed from its normal position, and replaced an inch or so higher up. Room is thus left above it for a couple of rows of cigars, while the space below forms a temporary cover for the article which it is desired to exchange. Thus, suppose that the performer desires to exchange an ordinary pack of cards for a prepared one.¹

¹ I myself many years ago arranged a small box on the same principle, for this specific purpose. The box was of cardboard, and externally of such a size as just to accommodate three packs

When it is desired to effect the change, the performer lays the unprepared pack close beside the box under which the prepared pack lies hidden. Presently, under cover of his own body, or of some other object, he carelessly lifts the box, as if merely to put it out of the way, and in so doing places it over the unprepared pack, the concealed pack being thereby exposed in its place. As he has beforehand shown, in a casual way, that the box contains cigars, no one is at all likely to suspect any preparation or contrivance about it.

At a smoking concert, or similar entertainment, the presence of a cigar-box is perfectly natural. Where it is necessary to find some special pretext for its introduction, it may be brought forward from a side-table to stand something on, say a tumbler or a billiard-ball, professedly that the spectators may have a better view of the object. Even an unprepared box of cigars may on occasion come in usefully, as the space behind it on the table forms a natural servante, a folded handkerchief supplying the necessary padding.

Apropos of the trap in Herr Willmann's cigar-box, I may pause to describe a little arrangement of my own in relation to such traps, which will be of special interest to the many amateurs who take a pleasure in manufacturing their own apparatus; though, be it said, I by no means commend the practice for general adoption, home-made apparatus, unless of the simplest kind, being usually very inferior to the purchased article.

of cards, one above the other. The bottom, however, was only two thirds of the way down, the third (prepared) pack being concealed underneath this and being exchanged for one of the others as above described. A rubber band round the box kept all snug until it became necessary to use it.

In a regular conjuring-table, traps are, as a matter of course, made of metal, but in a home-made table or in a box, as described in *More Magic* (p. 7), designed to take the place of a table, the amateur will find wood a better material for the traps, and rubber bands the best form of spring. Fig. 32 illustrates the external

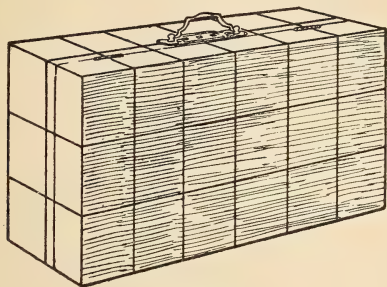


FIG. 32.

appearance of the box used by myself. It will be seen that its surface is divided, by incised lines, into squares, ostensibly by way of ornament. As a matter of fact,

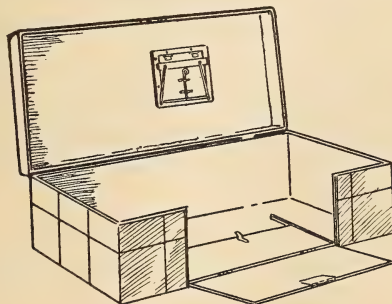


FIG. 33.

however, one of the squares is a trap, whose construction may be gathered from an inspection of Figs. 33

and 34, the former representing the interior of the box with the trap closed, the latter the trap itself, open. The flap is attached, by two hinges, *a a*, to the

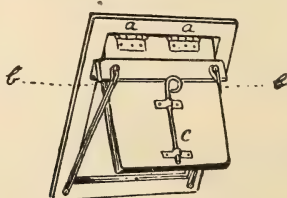


FIG. 34.

under surface of the lid, the crosspiece *bb*, which is screwed to the flap, precluding any possibility of its rising too high. The upward pressure necessary to keep it in position is afforded by the tension of a rubber band, *b*, on each side, slipped over the heads of two ordinary round-headed screws. Of course such bands require frequent renewing, but, on the other hand, they cost practically nothing. They have the advantage of working in the gentlest and most noiseless way, and their tension can be adjusted to a nicety, by due regard to the size and width of the bands used. The little wire bolt, *c*, keeps the trap securely closed when not needed for immediate use. A drop flap, which may or may not have gussets at the sides, forms a convenient servante.

The servante shown in the illustration is made to draw out a little way, so as to increase its available area.

The handle for carrying the box is fixed on the "hinge" side, which in use is turned towards the spectators. If of the sunken kind, there is no objection to

its being placed in the centre of the lid, the trap being shifted a little more to the right or left, but the former position of the handle makes the box more convenient for carrying.

IMPROVED "PULLS."

Readers of *More Magic* may remember that under the title of "The Wandering Ring" (p. 196) a trick was described involving the use of a spring pull; whereby the ring was secretly transferred (*viâ* the coat sleeves) from the left hand into the right. In connection with appliances of general utility, it will be worth while to call the attention of the reader anew to this little contrivance, which, in its up-to-date forms, not only is more perfect in detail, but finds a considerably extended sphere of usefulness.

As to the first of these improved forms, I cannot do better than quote, with a little amplification, the description given by Herr Willmann in his *Moderne Salon Magie*.

Within a cylindrical brass drum (see Fig. 35) is fixed

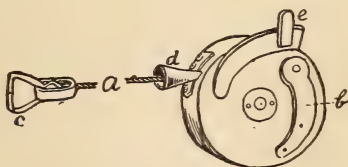


FIG. 35.

a spring barrel, round which is coiled a catgut line, *a*, and which is wound up by drawing out this line. To one of the faces of the barrel is attached a ratchet wheel, between the teeth of which a pall, attached to

the upper end of the spring, *b*, can be inserted, but is again withdrawn by pressing *e* (which is a movable arm, pivoted against the face of the drum) towards *b*. The outer end of *e* is wedge-shaped; and this being forced under the end of *b* the pall is lifted and the barrel released. To the free end of the gut line is attached a pair of spring nippers, *c*, which, when the apparatus is not in use, rest partially within the mouth of the funnel-shaped tube, *d*. A spring between the shorter arms of the nippers keeps their jaws closed so long as they are clear of the tube, but so soon as the shorter arms are drawn within it, these are pressed together by the sides of the tube, and the jaws open.

The full length of the gut line is about five feet. It may be drawn out to this or any less extent, and fixed at that point by means of the pall. The apparatus thus arranged is placed for use in the trouser-pocket on the right side. The line is carried across the back and down the left sleeve, the nippers hanging in the neighbourhood of the wristband.

The performer desires, say, to vanish a silk handkerchief. He takes it by the centre, letting the four corners hang down, and transfers it by the part he holds to the left hand. This hand meanwhile has got possession of the little nippers, and, by pressure on their shorter arms, has opened their jaws, between which he inserts the centre of the handkerchief. The moment he releases the pressure of the fingers the jaws close, and the handkerchief is held securely. The performer now places his right hand in the trouser-pocket, and presses *e* under *b*, thereby withdrawing the pall and causing the barrel to wind up the gut line. Meanwhile, standing with his left side turned towards the spectators, he

slowly waves the left hand about, and while apparently merely gathering the handkerchief into the hand, allows it gradually to be drawn through the hand up the sleeve. As soon as it is quite free, the pull draws it across the back into the pocket. By elevating the arm, and so allowing the line to run freely, or by pressing the arm to the body, and thereby checking it, the speed at which the pull operates can be regulated at pleasure.

The performer continues the rubbing away movement of the left hand for a moment or two after it is actually empty. Meanwhile the nippers have been pulled home into the tube *d*, when the jaws open and release the handkerchief. The performer may then produce it from his pocket with the right hand, the left being shown empty.

The working of the trick as above described enables the conjurer to have the handkerchief marked by the spectators in any way they please, so as to negative any idea of substitution.

The apparatus may equally well be used to cause a ring to travel from one hand to the other, as described in *More Magic*. The trick in question is so exceptionally effective that, for the benefit of readers who may not possess that book, I here reproduce it, in a slightly altered form.

The performer, with the apparatus arranged, as above mentioned, in the right trouser-pocket, and with the nippers secured between the fingers of the left hand, or with their jaws closed on the shirt-cuff, borrows from different persons a couple of rings, the more exceptional in appearance the better. Showing a number of

short ends of narrow ribbons of various colours, he invites a third person to choose one of them, and therewith to tie the two rings together. Under pretence of examining the knot, he engages the ribbon in the little nippers, the cord, still slack, passing along the under side of his wrist.

With due precaution against any tell-tale exposure of the nippers, he shows the rings, held between the tips of the fingers and thumb. "These are the rings you lent me, are they not? I close my hand upon them, so. Now you would imagine that so long as I keep my hand closed, and you keep your eyes on my hand, the rings could not possibly escape from it. But you would be mistaken. However closely you may watch my hand, the rings will leave it, and find their way into this pocket." He thrusts the right hand for a moment into the trouser-pocket, as if merely to show which pocket he is referring to, and in that moment presses the little lever which releases the pull. "All I have to do is to dematerialize them, which I do by means of a little friction." With the fingers of the left hand he makes a rubbing movement, and under cover of such movement, lets the rings escape up the sleeve. A moment later he shows the hand empty; and produces the rings from the pocket on the opposite side, as previously announced.

Where the article vanished by the pull is not to be immediately reproduced, a different arrangement is sometimes adopted, the apparatus being attached by means of a belt to the waist of the performer behind his back, underneath the coat; the mouth of the tube *d* being directed to the left armhole. The barrel is in

this case started by means of a subsidiary pull, a piece of fine black cord attached to *e*, thence passing through a hole in the central screw, and finally brought round the right side, and attached to one of the front brace-buttons. By allowing the hand to rest for a moment on the hip (a perfectly natural position) the performer is enabled to get hold of the cord, a very slight tightening of which suffices to start the pull. This arrangement admits of the employment of a larger and stronger apparatus than could well be used in the pocket.

THE "LIGHTNING" VANISHER.

Another excellent mechanical "pull," for the knowledge of which I am indebted to the courtesy of Messrs. Hamley, goes by the above name. In principle it is practically identical with that last described, but the two differ in many points of detail. Fig. 36 illustrates what may be called the front view, and Fig. 37

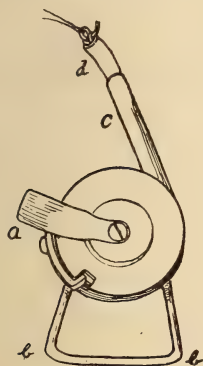


FIG. 36.

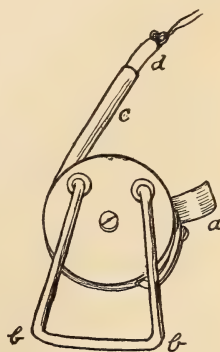


FIG. 37.

the back view, of the apparatus, which is of brass, handsomely nickel-plated. The drum, clock-barrel,

cogwheel, and catch are retained, but the latter is withdrawn by pressure on a lever, *a*, and the line is not of gut, but whip-cord with a gut loop.

The vanisher is placed in position by means of a horseshoe-shaped wire loop, *bb*, for the reception of which a special pocket is made in the vest, outside, close to the right armhole; the side shown in Fig. 37 being next the body, and the lever, *a*, resting just within the armpit. In this position, a very slight pressure of the arm against the body depresses the lever sufficiently to withdraw the catch and release the pull. The tube *c* comes just within the sleeve, at the armhole; and the cord, which is in this case only about two feet long, passes, on leaving the tube, through an inch length, of soft rubber, *d*, which acts as a buffer on its return, the pull in this case being designed to act very rapidly. The spring is therefore made very strong, and brings back the cord with great energy. The cord is knotted on the outside of the rubber, which breaks the violence of the shock.

The special object of this pull is to instantly vanish a handkerchief; though it may of course be made available for other purposes. For this particular use, however, the nippers described in connection with the other pull are dispensed with, and replaced by a simple loop of thin gut, about six inches in length. The handkerchief to be vanished is secretly passed through this as far as the middle, and doubled in half. If it then be held loosely in the hand, and the pull released, it flies up the sleeve with the rapidity of a lightning-flash.

This appliance is frequently used in connection with the very popular trick of vanishing a silk handkerchief

from a glass lamp-chimney held between the two hands.¹

While upon the subject of "pulls" I must not omit to mention one or two little modifications which may frequently be made with advantage in the direct or non-mechanical pull. The reader will doubtless remember that in the case of the "Buatier" pull, which was the first of this class, one end of the cord was secured to the left wrist, whence it passed up the sleeve, across the back, and down the right sleeve, where it terminated in a little cylindrical cup, for the reception of the handkerchief or other article to be vanished. A valuable addition to this form of pull is a piece of flesh-coloured silk thread, about twelve inches, or a trifle more, in length, the ends of which are attached to the edge of the cup, at opposite sides. The loop thus formed is passed over the second or third finger. At the proper moment the second finger of the opposite hand is passed under this loop; and by a slight forward movement, draws the cup into the hand, where it is forthwith palmed for use as may be desired.

So far, however, as the mere disappearance of handkerchiefs is concerned, the cup may be altogether dispensed with, the pull consisting merely of a piece of stout silk thread. At one end of this a running loop is formed, and this is attached to the right shirt-cuff. The cuff must be one of the two-stud kind, and the loop drawn over both studs, the two keeping the loop so far distended as to admit of its instant detachment. From the cuff the thread passes up the right sleeve, across the back next to the shirt, and out of the left

¹ See *post*, "Handkerchief Tricks."

armhole of the vest, the end being attached to the hinder brace-button on that side, but sufficient slack being left to form a short hanging loop just below the vest. Thus arranged, the thread creates no obstacle to the freest movements on the part of the performer. When the pull is needed for use he releases the running loop, by the aid of the opposite thumb, from the two studs, and passes it over the second and third fingers. In the course of his patter it is an easy matter to pass the handkerchief as far as its centre within the loop, after which the fingers are withdrawn, the handkerchief remaining in the hand. The thumb of the left hand being now inserted in the bight of the silk thread on the opposite side, a quick downward movement draws it tight, and causes the handkerchief to vanish up the sleeve.

It will be found desirable to use thread of two colours, flesh-colour for the running loop, and black at the opposite end, joined at some intermediate point.

It will be obvious that the running loop and stud arrangement is equally applicable to a rubber pull.

GUIDES, FOR USE WITH PULLS.

In connection with pulls, I may here mention a little contrivance which has been recently introduced for keeping the cord in the way it should go, and, theoretically, for making the pull work more easily and certainly. It consists of a brass tube of not quite an inch in length and one quarter of an inch outside diameter, mounted on a circular flange of the same metal, as shown in Fig. 38. The little holes in the metal plate are to enable it to be sewn to the

performer's vest, in such position as may best suit the purpose in view.

The contrivance is well intended, but, in the form

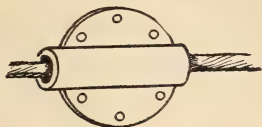


FIG. 38.

above described, its utility is extremely questionable. If the direction of the cord is through it in a straight line, a guide is obviously unnecessary. If, on the other hand, the cord enters or leaves the tube at an angle, friction must necessarily be created, varying in degree as the angle is more or less acute. If such a contrivance be necessary, a better form would be as shown in Fig 39, the cord passing between two grooved wheels, mounted between two slips of brass, chamfered as to their inner edges, and placed so close together that there would be no possibility of the cord jamming. Personally, however, I have found excellent results from a much simpler contrivance, *viz.*, a ring of polished ivory, half an inch in external, and a quarter of an inch in internal diameter, stitched to the garment with due regard to the direction of the cord. In default of ivory, a similar ring of bone or brass may be used with very little sacrifice of practical effectiveness ; but ivory is the ideal material where friction is to be avoided.

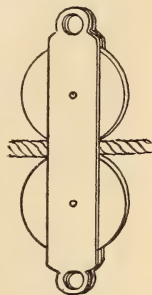


Fig. 39.

Another ingenious anti-friction contrivance, in-

tended specially for use with elastic pulls, is the invention of Mr. J. Holt Schooling, of statistical celebrity. Mr. Schooling's plan is to thread the elastic cord through a tube of coiled hard brass wire, about one quarter of an inch in diameter. One end of this tube is made fast at the starting-point of the elastic. The other is led across the body, and out at the armpit on the side at which the pull is arranged to operate. Thus guarded, the elastic works with an extremely small amount of friction.

THE GLASS WITH MIRROR PARTITION.

Among appliances of general utility, this merits a place of special honour, for few pieces of apparatus have a wider range of employment.

The credit of the original idea belongs to the veteran wizard Hartz, to whom the conjurer of to-day, though usually unconscious of the obligation, is indebted for some of the most effective weapons in his magical armoury.

The apparatus, in its simplest form, consists of a glass tumbler (preferably on a foot and having straight sides, as shown in Fig. 40) divided vertically into two compartments by a movable partition of patent plate, *i. e.*, thin silvered glass, protected on the silvered side by a coating of coloured varnish. To use it, the tumbler, with the plate in position, is so placed on the table that the mirror side of the partition shall be directly facing the spectators, in which condition the glass appears to be empty, though the space behind the partition may contain anything the

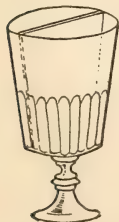


FIG. 40.

performer pleases, say bonbons. When he desires to produce these, he shows a handkerchief, first on one side, then on the other, to prove it unprepared; and throws it over the glass. He then nips it in the centre, between finger and thumb, and so lifts it off again, at the same time lifting out the partition with it. This remains within the handkerchief, and may be removed at leisure; meanwhile the glass, previously shown empty, is now seen to be half full, any doubt on the subject being removed by an immediate distribution of the bonbons.

The tumbler thus prepared is, however, merely the germ of the complete contrivance, which enables the performer to show both sides of the goblet, and so an empty and a full compartment, or two different sets of contents, in succession.

To this end, the mirror partition is made to consist of two pieces of the patent plate, glued back to back, with a piece of cotton velvet between them. The velvet should be a shade larger than the plates themselves, and when all is dry the margin should be trimmed down to a width of about an eighth of an inch; this arrangement making the partition fit more exactly in its place, and at the same time preventing any rattling against the sides of the glass.

Thus arranged, the glass looks alike, whichever side of it is presented to the spectators. The hinder compartment is loaded with, say, a blue silk handkerchief; the front compartment being at the outset empty. In this latter is now openly placed a *red* silk handkerchief. It is clear that if now the glass be reversed, the front compartment for the time being will be occupied by the blue handkerchief, the one having apparently changed

into the other. The blue handkerchief being removed, the glass is again apparently empty.

The only difficulty is to give the glass the necessary half-turn without the knowledge of the spectators, and this is practically no difficulty at all, for it may be done in three or four different ways. In the case of a small glass, the simplest plan is to hold the glass in one hand, and with the other to throw a handkerchief over it. The operator a moment later decides to perform the trick without cover, and so at once removes the handkerchief, but meanwhile the glass has received the necessary half-turn, and the trick is done.

Another plan is to borrow a lady's fan, and with it to fan the glass and its contents, the half-turn being made under cover of the fanning movement. If the contents of the two sides are to a casual view alike, as for instance if a white silk handkerchief, enveloped in a blue one, is to be changed for a red one similarly enveloped, even this amount of cover is not necessary. The performer, standing beside his table, lifts the glass with the hand nearest to it, and transfers it across his body to the other. In this case the semicircle described by the arm automatically produces the half-turn of the glass.

For stage use, the mirror principle is applied to glasses of large size; large enough, indeed, in some cases, to accommodate a dove or small rabbit in the hinder compartment. For the semi-revolution of glasses of this size it is necessary to make special provision, which usually takes one of two forms. The first plan is to have a circular disc, a little larger than the foot of the glass, let into the top of the performer's table. Just below the opening a wooden bar is fixed,

and on this, by means of a metal pin in its centre, the disc revolves, actuated by a thread, led away "behind the scenes" to the hands of the assistant. A "stop," at a given point on either side, prevents the disc making more than the desired half-turn. The vase being placed upon the disc, the performer covers it with a handkerchief. This he does in a leisurely way, holding the handkerchief in the first instance well to the front, before dropping it on the top. During the instant thus occupied, the assistant pulls the thread, and the trick is done. By having a double pull, travelling round the spindle in opposite directions, the vase may, if desired, be brought back to its original position, but this is rarely necessary.

Another plan, which is in some respects preferable, is to place the vase, as if for its better exhibition, on a heavy circular stand, of ebony or ebonized wood, about two inches in height. The upper part of this, which is covered with black velvet, is movable, and works in a precisely similar way to the disc let into the table top; the pull being led away after the same fashion as with the former. If it is necessary to bring in the stand after the commencement of the performance, the assistant should take up his position with the thread in his hand, and pay it out gently till the performer has placed the stand in the desired position.

Besides the immense variety of "changes" which a glass of this kind places within the reach of the performer, it has another use, by no means to be despised. The glass, say, is standing on the table empty, having been used for some trick and being apparently done with for the time being. The performer rests his wand upon it, lying from back to front. Presently he has

occasion to get rid of some article, say a glove, which is palmed in his right hand. With the same hand he picks up the wand, and the glove drops silently into the hinder compartment. A moment later the glass is carried off by the assistant, who extracts the hidden article, and disposes of it as may be necessary for the purpose of the trick.

Where it is proposed to utilize the glass in this exceptional way, and not for its ordinary purpose, the hinder compartment is sometimes lined with tin-foil, making, while such compartment remains in the rear, no difference in its external appearance. The space thus enclosed is then half filled with cotton wool (preferably black) on which a watch or other delicate article may be dropped without fear of injury. Of course in this case there is no revolution of the glass.

Two cautions may here be given with advantage. First, as to the pattern of the glass. This should not be quite plain externally, but of a cut or moulded pattern, a little external ornament assisting materially to mask the presence of the mirror partition. What is called a celery glass lends itself very well to the arrangement. The other point to be noted is that any object placed in the foremost compartment, and not entirely filling it, is reflected by the mirror; thus an egg appears as two eggs, and so on. This may be got over by professing to put two eggs in the glass, while actually putting in only one. Some performers meet the difficulty by using a half egg, cut longitudinally, and laying the flat side close to the mirror. In either case, however, it must be remembered that the performer's hand is also reflected so long as it is in the

glass, and it is therefore necessary to stand so as to screen it, at the critical moment, from the view of the spectators.

The following is a simple illustration of the use of the mirror glass in its smaller size.

The glass (without the partition) is first handed for inspection, and when returned is covered with a borrowed handkerchief. In covering it, however, the performer introduces, with a little intentional clumsiness, the mirror partition, and behind it two small silk handkerchiefs, of different colours. (These articles have previously been concealed under the vest.) Being taxed with having introduced something, he disproves the accusation (apparently) by uncovering the glass, which appears to be empty. He then, standing beside the table, and holding a handkerchief at right angles to the audience so that both sides can be seen, draws it sideways over the glass. He then picks up the glass by grasping it through the handkerchief and invites some one to take hold of the foot under the handkerchief, and to clasp the handkerchief tightly round the glass, so that nothing can possibly get in. Then, taking two other silk handkerchiefs (duplicates of those in the glass), the operator "vanishes" them by any method he pleases (see *post*) and orders them to pass into the glass. Finally he jerks off the outer handkerchief, nipping the glass division through the fabric and carrying it off with it, when the two silk handkerchiefs are revealed.

Hartz, in his mechanical days, was accustomed to utilize the mirror glass for an important addition to the brilliant "Shower of Gold" trick. The glass used

in this case was a tall celery glass, with double mirror partition. At the outset, both compartments were empty. Showing a bag of golden (?) coins, the performer poured them unmistakably into the glass (the forward compartment). In covering the glass with a handkerchief, he turned it round, bringing the empty side to the front. The coins were then ordered to pass (as described in *More Magic*, pp. 428-433) into the glass vase upon the mechanical table, wherein they were duly heard to fall, and were ultimately found. When the mirror glass was again uncovered, the coins with which it had been filled were no longer visible, proving incontestably, according to conjurer's logic, that those same coins had actually passed into the other vase.

By another adaptation of the same principle Hartz produced an extremely effective form of the "Fish and Ink" trick. The mirror partition was in this case secured by a waterproof cement to the sides of the vase. (This, by the way, is a costly and troublesome matter, for, to be perfect, the glass must be grooved vertically to receive the partition.) The side remote from the audience was beforehand filled with water and goldfish, the other side being left empty. In this condition the glass was placed on the table, but a little later (professedly in order that it might be better seen) a block of wood, containing a turn-table arrangement as already described, was introduced beneath it. Ink was brought forward in an earthenware jug, in size apparently of similar internal dimensions to the vase, but so filled up with cement as to contain in reality only half as much as its external appearance would seem to denote. The ink, however, was the real thing, and the spectators were invited to satisfy themselves fully

as to its genuineness, even by tasting it, if desired. This done, it was poured into the forward compartment of the vase, which it just filled. The performer, retiring to as great a distance as possible (so as to divide general attention with the vase) fired a pistol. Under cover of the report the assistant gave the necessary pull, the glass revolved, and the ink was seen to be transformed to clear water, with goldfish swimming about in it.

CONTRIVANCES FOR "PASSING OFF."

One of the conjurer's most frequent requirements is to be able, unperceived, to "pass off" borrowed articles (watches, rings, and the like), to be dealt with according to circumstances, behind the scenes. With a stage arranged after Robert-Houdin's fashion, this was a very easy matter. The stage was enclosed on each side as well as at the back, forming what is known as a "box" scene, representing a drawing-room, with white and gold furniture of the Louis XV. period.¹ Fixed against the canvas wall on either side was an elegant little table, of the bracket or "console" kind. In each of these was a trap, down which any article to be passed off might be dropped. The assistant, thrusting his arm into the interior of the table from behind, took possession of the article, and disposed of it according to the requirements of the case. But the Robert-Houdin stage is a thing of the past. The tendency of the present day is to do with as little stage-furniture as possible, and it has been found necessary to devise other methods of "passing off," to meet the altered

¹ For an exact representation of Robert-Houdin's stage, see *The Secrets of Stage Conjuring*, p. 31.

conditions of modern conjuring. Some such devices have been already described, and others will be indicated in connection with special tricks. But the wizard, like the archer, cannot have too many strings to his bow, and here again Hartz comes to the fore with a couple of clever and little known contrivances.

The first (Fig. 41) is a clear glass bottle, as used for claret, from one side of which has been cut out a piece oval in shape, and measuring about three inches by two. To this is adapted a sort of tin cup, forming a dry chamber within the body of the bottle, but not interfering, save to a very small extent, with its capacity for holding liquid. In the bottom of the cavity is a little cotton wool, to prevent the rattling of anything placed inside.



FIG. 41.

The performer desires to pass off, say, a borrowed watch, of which he has secretly gained possession. At the appropriate moment (feeling a little faint, or for other good and sufficient reason) he asks his assistant to bring him a glass of wine. A glass and *the* bottle are brought in on a tray, the opening of course turned away from the audience. The performer helps himself, and replaces the bottle; which is then carried away again, the audience little suspecting that in the act of pouring out the wine the performer has passed into the bottle the borrowed article, a substitute having been previously left in sight, or in the keeping of one of the spectators.

The second contrivance, suitable for smaller articles, such as coins or rings, takes the form of a match-box,

or match-vase, of the kind in which the matches are inserted upright (see Fig. 42). The performer, wishing to pass off, we will suppose, a borrowed ring, under some pretext calls for a light; say, in order to seal up a packet professedly containing the borrowed article. The assistant brings him, in one hand a candle, and on the palm of the other the box of matches. An examination of the box, if permitted, would reveal the fact that it has a tubular opening, as indicated by the dotted lines, right down the centre, the matches resting between this and the outer portion. In the act of taking a match, the performer drops the ring down the centre space into the assistant's hand. This done, the box may be placed upon the table, and left there till the trick is concluded, the assistant walking off with the borrowed article.

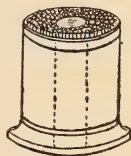


FIG. 42.

The same thing may be done with an unprepared match-box of the ordinary kind, the ring being simply dropped among the matches. But in this case the box must be carried off by the assistant, a less perfect arrangement than leaving it on the table, and carrying off the borrowed article only.

A contrivance of my own for "passing off" purposes was a metal powder-flask, with a cavity in the side, after the manner of the Hartz bottle. This was brought in to load a pistol. Having served this purpose, it carried off in its interior the borrowed article. Another expedient which suggested itself to me, though I never made practical use of it, was to have a candlestick made with a cavity in its foot, into which

the borrowed article might be dropped. There is never any lack of pretexts for the use of a candle in magical performances.

THE HARTZ PISTOL.

Among Hartz's earlier inventions is an ingeniously contrived pistol for passing off borrowed rings. It was, however, a little too suggestive of being made specially for conjuring purposes, which was probably the reason that the inventor, in his later performances, discarded it in favour of the more subtle expedients already described. It has now for some years been procurable at the principal conjuring depôts.

To an ordinary pocket-pistol is adapted a cylindrical brass tube, as *aa* in Fig. 43, about two inches in diameter, shouldered off into a neck of smaller dimensions, *b*, where it fits over the pistol. So large a barrel naturally demands a special ramrod. The stem, *c*, of this, is of wood, but the head, *d*, which is two inches deep, is of metal, cylindrical in form, and of such diameter as to pass easily down the barrel. Its lower edge is slightly turned in all round. Resting on this turned edge is a loose bottom, *e*, normally pressed downwards by a spiral spring, *f*, above it (kept in position by a central pin, *g*), but yielding

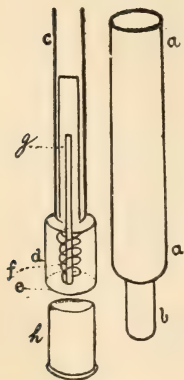


FIG. 43.

easily to upward pressure. With this is used a brass cup, *h*, in general appearance exactly like the head of the ramrod, but of such a size as to fit somewhat tightly within it.

When it is desired to use the pistol, the barrel proper is loaded, in the ordinary way, with a light charge of powder, and the tube *aa* is placed in position. Into this the cup *h* is then privately inserted, the performer taking due precaution that the weapon shall thenceforth be held muzzle uppermost. The borrowed rings are now dropped into the tube, naturally falling into *h*. The act of ramming down forces *d* over *h*, the loose bottom *e* receding to make way for the rings. When the ramrod is again withdrawn, and carried off by the assistant, the rings are carried off within it, and are at his disposal for the purpose of the trick.

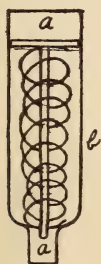


FIG. 44.

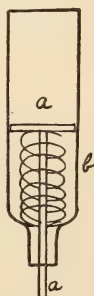


FIG. 45.

Apropos of pistols, I may take the opportunity of mentioning another rather ingenious pistol-tube, of French construction. This also is cylindrical in shape and contains a piston *a a*, normally pressed upwards by the action of a candle-spring, *b*, to the position shown in Fig. 44, but capable of being pressed back as in Fig. 45, and secured in that position by a spring catch. To the upper face of *a* a bit of crumpled white cambric is glued.

The performer, having borrowed a number of small

articles, drops them unmistakably into the tube, in which he has previously forced back the piston as shown in Fig. 45, finally borrowing a white handkerchief, which he uses by way of wad. Going to a side table in search of a cap for the pistol, he lowers the mouth of the tube for a moment behind the farther end of the table, and at the same moment releases the catch. The spring expands, and the articles are shot out on to a servante, whence they are subsequently carried off by the assistant. The internal appearance of the tube remains the same as before; the dummy handkerchief having taken the place of the borrowed one.

With this pistol it is desirable (professedly "not to alarm the ladies") to use caps only, as the explosion of a charge of powder would have disagreeable consequences.

THE "EXCELSIOR" CLIP.

The little appliance to which the above title is given is one of the smallest pieces of apparatus which can be used by the conjurer, but its usefulness is out of all proportion to its size. It is a minute spring clip, of steel, with the outer portion of one of its longer arms bent over into the form of a hook, and sharpened to a

point, so that it can be hooked on to any portion of the clothing (see Fig. 46). Its extreme length is only half an inch, and its width three eighths of an inch. The clip, however, opens widely enough to take in the edge of a half-crown (as in Fig. 47), and on the other hand



FIG. 46.



FIG. 47.

closes with so firm a grip that it will securely hold a card, or even a slip of paper.

The possible uses of this little clip are legion. For instance, it may be hooked, holding a shilling or a half-crown, inside the vest, just above the waistband, or underneath the lapel of the coat. Under the vest a little higher up, it will hold a card, or half a dozen cards, ready for production when necessary. By its aid a coin may be hung on one finger at the back of the hand, and so "vanished," or may be temporarily suspended on the back of a volunteer assistant, to be reproduced, apparently from nowhere, a moment later. Or again (for this little "tip" I am indebted to Mr. John Hamley) the performer may ask a volunteer assistant to thoroughly shuffle the pack. When it is returned, he remarks that that was a good enough shuffle for a beginner, but if the gentleman had been a poker-player, he would have kept back a few cards under his knee, so! Whereupon he passes his empty hand under his own knee and produces a straight flush, or some similarly staggering combination. The explanation is, of course, that the cards in question were suspended in the clip behind the leg, the performer taking care, until he has produced them, to keep full face to the company.

These are but a few of the possible uses of the Excel-sior, which, by the way, has two secondary advantages: first, it is so small that if accidentally dropped on the floor it causes no sound and attracts no attention; and secondly, its price is so nominal that the performer can use, or lose, half a dozen without feeling any the poorer.

THE SMOKE APPARATUS.

Most of my readers are doubtless acquainted with the "smoke" trick, viz.: the production of clouds of white

vapour by means of the combination of liquid ammonia and hydrochloric acid. A few drops of each suffice, the mode of combination depending upon the trick in hand, and the fancy of the performer. In the original form of the trick a glass vase, with a cover of the same material, was used. The vase was wetted with, say, the ammonia, and the cover with the acid. So soon as the cover was placed on the vase, the "smoke" began to form within. In another version the performer produces two clay pipes, empty, and to all appearance innocent of preparation; but when he takes one of them in his mouth, and covers its bowl with that of the other, heavy white clouds at once begin to roll out from between them. It is hardly necessary to mention that the one pipe contains a few drops of the alkali, and the other a like quantity of the acid, and that the performer, though pretending to inhale, really exhales, thereby forcing out the vapour from between the pipes. To inhale the vapour, which is chlorine gas, would be distinctly undesirable.

There is in any case hardly enough in the smoke trick to make it worth independent exhibition, but as an incidental effect arising naturally in the course of some other trick, it will often have considerable dramatic value. When for instance a performer takes a given article (apparently) in his hand, and rubs it away to nothingness, the feat will gain considerably in point of realism if he can make it dissolve in visible smoke. A German conjurer, Dr. Avon, has devised an ingenious little apparatus for producing this effect with ease and certainty.

An inspection of our illustration, Fig. 48 (borrowed from the German magical serial, *Die Zauberwelt*), will

make the construction of the apparatus pretty clear. *a* is a little flat bottle of, say, half an ounce capacity,

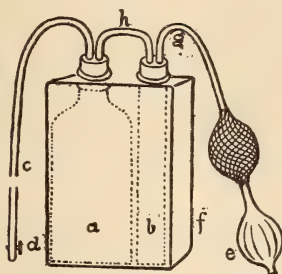


FIG. 48.

and *b* is a test tube. In the mouth of each is a cork, perforated by two holes. *h* is a tube of glass or metal (or two tubes connected by a third of rubber) forming a channel of communication between the two vessels, which are enclosed in a little tin case, *f*. The little bottle is destined for the reception of the hydrochloric acid, and the test tube for that of the ammonia, say twenty drops of each. The object of having the bottle *a* comparatively large, in proportion to its contents, is that it may act as a chamber for the formation of the gas. In each cork is inserted a second short bent tube, of glass or metal, in connection with one of rubber. The rubber tubes may be of small bore, but should be heavy in point of substance, that they may not collapse too readily on pressure. The tube *g*, the one in connection with the ammonia, terminates in a rubber ball, *e*, pressure on which will naturally force the vapour of the ammonia out of *b* and into *a*, and thence, transformed into chlorine gas, through the tube *c* on the opposite side. This tube is from considerations

of space shown "broken off" in the diagram, but it is in fact of considerable length. The outer end may either be left open, or terminate in a little tap, as *d*. The dimensions of the tin case need not exceed two and one half inches square and three quarters of an inch from back to front, so that it is easily carried in an inside pocket, or it may be attached, by means of a couple of bent pins soldered to the case, to the inside of the vest.

From the case the tube *c* is carried down the right sleeve, terminating a little above the cuff, and attached thereto by a thread, so as to be promptly get-at-able. The air-ball, *e*, should hang somewhere on the opposite side, covered by the coat, but within easy reach of the performer's left hand.

The treatment of the free end of *c* is an open question. Dr. Avon himself suggests two or three alternatives. First, to leave it quite open. This plan has the drawback that an accidental pressure of the air-ball might cause a premature appearance of the "smoke" from the sleeve, which the performer would find it difficult to account for satisfactorily. To prevent this, the use of a little tap, as *d* in the diagram, is suggested, but this likewise is open to objection as being liable to catch in the sleeve. A third plan is to transfer the little tap to the point *g*, but here it is not very readily get-at-able.

There is a further point to be considered, viz., that in either of the cases above mentioned the white vapour comes out in a single stream from the extremity of *c*; whereas to produce a complete illusion it should rise in a cloud from the hand. To meet this difficulty, the inventor suggests that *c* be made to terminate in a hollow ball, perforated with several holes.

In my own opinion, neither of these plans is entirely satisfactory. What is needed is some form of terminal which shall effectually cut off the gas till needed, and on the other hand, when it escapes, shall allow it to do so in a diffused form. I would suggest some such appliance as depicted in Figs. 49, 50, wherein *aa* represents a



FIG. 49.

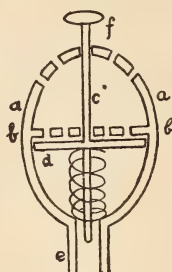


FIG. 50.

hollow egg, of some hard wood, two inches in length by one and one quarter in diameter, and divided in half, internally, by a diaphragm, *bb*, perforated (as would be also the upper half of *aa*) with several holes. These would usually be kept closed by the contact of a disc *d*, connected with a plunger *c*, forced upwards by the action of a spiral spring. The lower end, *e*, of the egg would be hollow, and in connection with the rubber tube *c* in Fig. 49. The working of the appliance will be almost self-evident. In its normal condition the holes in *bb* are closed; but the moment the stud, *f*, at the head of the plunger, was pressed down, these holes would be clear, and the gas would stream out through the openings in the upper part of *aa*.

A very effective illustration of the use of the smoke

apparatus in the hands of the inventor himself will be found in the chapter devoted to "Glove Tricks."

A MAGICAL EXPLOSIVE.

The mention of the smoke apparatus recalls another little chemical secret, for the knowledge of which I am indebted to a very distant correspondent, Mr. W. J. Collins, of North Ipswich, Queensland. Discreetly used, it will be found to impart an element of genuine mystery even to an otherwise commonplace trick.

The *recipe* is as follows: Take a few flakes (not more) of ordinary iodine, say as much as will lie on a threepenny-piece. Reduce to powder, place in a wine-glass, and add a small teaspoonful of liquid ammonia. Let the mixture stand for half an hour, and then filter through blotting-paper. A dark brown substance is left behind, formerly known as iodide of nitrogen. This, however, is now found to be a misnomer; there is in fact no appropriate popular name for the product. The chemical formula is NH_3I_2 . It is a powerful fulminate, and indeed will explode spontaneously if dried in too warm a place. It should be divided, while still wet, into minute portions, each not much larger than a millet seed. Each of these is laid on fresh blotting-paper for a few minutes to get rid of its superfluous moisture, and then, while still damp, transferred to the article on which it is intended to be used. When quite dry, the slightest friction, or even pressure will make it explode, though, *in the minute quantities above mentioned*, without danger.¹

¹ The reader may here be reminded that *all fulminates are dangerous in careless hands*, and the one I have described is exceptionally lively. Too much caution, therefore, cannot be used in

The magical possibilities of such an explosive will be obvious to any experienced performer. One of the uses suggested by Mr. Collins is the preparation of a penny with a little dab of the fulminate. This is secretly substituted for a borrowed coin, and a spectator is invited to hold it, being at the same time told that if he rubs it ever so little it will jump out of his hand. When he does so, the explosion takes place, and unless he has much stronger nerves than the majority of people, he forthwith drops the coin, the effect to the spectators being that it has spontaneously jumped out of his hand.

Again, by preparing the wand accordingly, the mere act of drawing it through the hand, or of tapping some object with it, will suffice to produce a report, which, not being explainable upon any ordinary principles, lends valuable support to the performer's profession of mystic powers.¹ The key of a box, the knob of a drawer, the corner of a card, or the edge of a paper bag may be prepared in like manner, and thus made to produce a new element of surprise in the trick for which the article is used.

To take a single illustration of the use of the ful-

handling it. The neophyte is recommended, first, never to manufacture more of the compound than is needed for his immediate purpose; and, secondly, to familiarize himself with it by careful and frequent experiment before he attempts to use it in public, as an excess, even of a few grains, might have disagreeable consequences. A pellet even of this size (•) will produce a very audible explosion.

¹ The central point of one end of the wand is a very good spot for the application. The wand thus prepared may be used throughout the evening without any fear of the fulminate going off prematurely, while at the right moment the performer has only to bring down the wand vertically on any hard surface, to produce the desired explosion.

minate in enhancing the effect of a trick, let us suppose that the performer, having had a card drawn from the pack, replaced (palmed off), and the pack shuffled, finally causes it to appear at the bottom. The trick, performed after this bald fashion, would be too commonplace to be worth the doing by any but the mildest of amateurs. But suppose that the performer has beforehand prepared a small tray with a dab of the fulminate in its centre, and that with the announcement, "I shall now cause the selected card to pass to the bottom" (where he has already placed it), he brings the pack down with a slap upon the tray, and thereby causes the explosion. The spectators cannot doubt that the card really did pass down at that particular moment, for they *heard it go*. The mark caused by the fulminate on the face of the card will be further proof of "no deception," and if the performer gravely assures them that this is a new discovery in electricity, or the like, nine tenths of the audience will be quite ready to believe him.

THE SPIDER.

Although from considerations of space I have found myself compelled to exclude coin tricks from the present volume (reserving them for future treatment), and although the "spider" was primarily designed for use in such tricks, it is so far an appliance of general utility that I think it may fairly find a place in the present chapter.

Readers who have had the pleasure of witnessing the clever performance of Mr. Nelson Downs will have noted his use of the very effective sleight known as the "back palm," whereby a coin is made to appear in and disap-

pear from the hand at pleasure without even closing the hand.

The *modus operandi* is as follows: The coin, which should be equal in diameter to the collective width of the second and third fingers (say a half-crown, if the hand be small, or a double florin or five-shilling piece in the case of a broad-handed person), is laid flat on the second and third fingers in the position shown in Fig. 51,

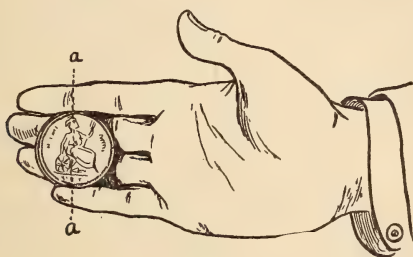


FIG. 51.

and held in that position by the pressure on its opposite edges of the first and fourth fingers. The second and third fingers are then bent down behind the coin till their

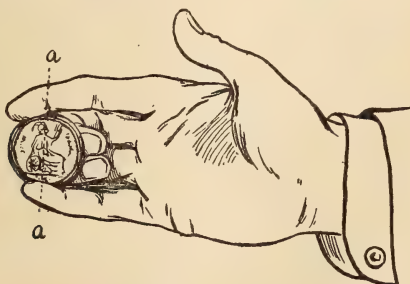


FIG. 52.

tips reach its lower edge, as in Fig. 52. These are again straightened, but this time in front of the coin, which

describes a semi-revolution on its own axis, *aa*, to allow of their passage; finally remaining at the back of the hand, as in Fig. 53, still supported by the lateral pres-

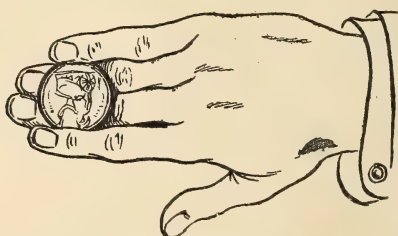


FIG. 53.

sure of the first and fourth fingers. The hand, of course, seen from the front, appears perfectly empty. The reverse movement brings the coin back again to its first position.

This is by no means an easy sleight, though it may be made much more so by using a specially prepared coin, having a couple of wire points, one eighth of an inch or less in length, soldered at right angles to its edge at opposite ends of its diameter. The lateral pressure of the fingers on these points holds the coin securely, and it revolves upon the axis thus created. Even so, however, a clumsy performer might manage to drop the coin. In aid of such weak brethren the ingenuity of magical inventors has devised a mechanical appliance, known (from a fanciful resemblance to that insect) as the "Spider," and enabling the merest tyro to produce a similar effect not only with coins but other small objects, with comparative certainty.

There are several forms of the spider, according to the effect desired to be produced. To produce and

“vanish” a coin, the apparatus is made as follows: Through a coin of sufficient size a hole is drilled (in the direction of its diameter) from side to side. A piece of copper wire, seven and one half inches in total length, is passed through this hole, bent as shown in Fig. 54, and at right angles to each of its ends is soldered a half-ring, also of copper, the whole, save the coin, being then enamelled flesh-colour. The coin revolves freely on its wire axis. To use the appliance, the performer so places it in the hand that the two semicircular clips embrace the roots of the first and fourth fingers, when the coin will take the precise position indicated in Fig. 51. The working is the same as that of the genuine sleight, but,

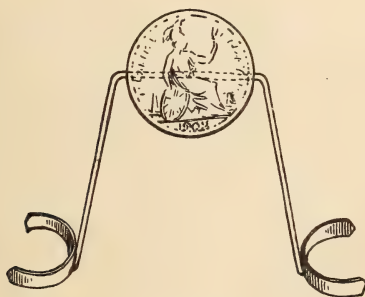


FIG. 54.

of course, infinitely easier, for it is, in this case, impossible to let fall the coin. The framework, being of the same colour as the hand and lying between the fingers, is practically invisible at a very short distance.

For the production of coins from the empty hand, a small metal shield takes the place of the perforated coin. To this shield is rivetted a spring clip, between which and the shield four coins can be secured. The apparatus, duly “loaded,” being placed in position, the

hand is shown empty (the clip and its contents being transferred to the back). The performer drops the hand, and at the same moment brings the clip to the front. The back of the hand is now kept towards the audience. With the thumb he pushes one coin towards the finger-tips, and produces it, say, from a lady's muff, or from under a gentleman's coat collar. With a wave of the arm, he again shows the hand empty by turning the coins to the rear; then bringing them back produces a second coin after some similar fashion, and so on, till the contents of the clip are exhausted.

A third form of the spider is designed to produce and vanish an egg. In this case the revolving shield is again employed: but, in place of the coin-clip, it has a couple of sharp points, three eighths of an inch in length and about half an inch apart, projecting at right angles from its surface. The egg, though ostensibly the genuine production of the hen, is in reality of cork, whitened over. It is, therefore, an equally easy matter to impale it on the projecting points and to detach it from them when the trick is complete, the shield being returned to the back of the hand.

There are yet other forms of the spider, adapted for different purposes. With a little practice, the necessary movement of the second and third fingers can be executed so rapidly as to be almost imperceptible, even with the hand at rest. If covered by a slight sweep of the arm at the same time, it becomes quite invisible. Any amateur desirous of obtaining a cheap reputation for skill in sleight-of-hand cannot do better than procure one or two spiders. The expert will probably elect to leave them alone. At best, the con-

and on all sides of us far greater wonders than it ever did on Robert-Houdin's stage. This altered state of things has naturally diminished its value to conjurers, who nowadays use it but little.

The disuse of electricity for magical purposes is in one respect to be regretted, inasmuch as several effective stage tricks, which depended upon it, have with it fallen into desuetude. The reader may be glad to know of a method hitherto absolutely unknown whereby some of the best of these can be worked without the aid of electricity, and, indeed, with greater ease and certainty.

The tricks for working which Hartz devised the apparatus which I am about to describe (and which has never been used by any performer save himself) are those of the Crystal Cash-box and Bell, and a special bird-cage trick, wherein a canary is made magically to appear in the suspended cage.

The apparatus itself, to the eye, consists merely of a piece of blind-cord hanging down in the centre of the stage just inside the proscenium, with a brass hook on its lower end. It is not, however, quite so simple as it looks. The hook is shown in section, actual size, in Figs. 57, 58. It is in fact a piece of brass tubing, bent and finished off to the required shape. At the lowest point of its inner curve is a hole through which comes the point of an inner and smaller hook, *a a*, the other end of which is connected with a silk line, *b*, passing up the supposed blind-cord. This latter is in reality a flexible tube of fine brass wire rolled spirally, and covered with wool or silk in such manner as to give it the appearance of a cord. The upper end of the hook is reduced in diameter, as shown, to allow of the end of

this tube being passed over it. When the inner line is slack the hook is in the condition shown in Fig. 57, but



FIG. 57.

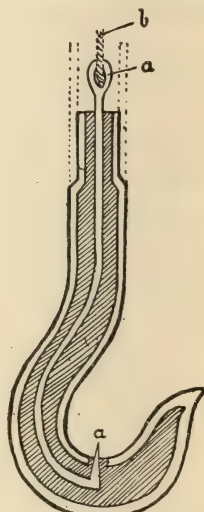


FIG. 58.

when it is drawn taut the point of the inner hook is raised, as in Fig. 58.

The upper end of the cord is out of sight, but if the spectator were permitted to trace it to the point of at-

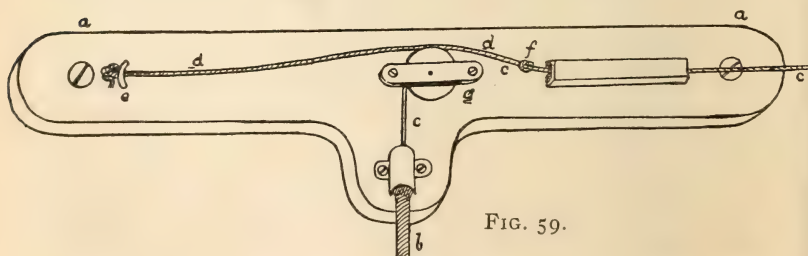


FIG. 59.

tachment, he would find the arrangement depicted in Fig. 59. Here *a a* is a brass plate six inches in length,

screwed to the inside of the proscenium. *b* is the upper end of the supposed blind-cord, and *c c c* the line passing through it, and led away to the hand of the assistant. *d d* is a short piece of rubber cord, one end of which is attached to a staple at *e*, and the other led to *c*, at a point (*f*) a little beyond the guide-pulley *g*. This rubber cord acts as a check, and prevents the silk line being pulled so far as to lift the cord *b* with it. It also ensures the return of *c c c*, and the consequent withdrawal of the hook *a* (Figs. 57, 58) the moment the pull is relaxed.

Each of the pieces of apparatus worked by means of this device is suspended by a ring hung on the hook, the mechanism of such ring being the complement of that of the hook. Fig. 60 gives a view of the magic bell.

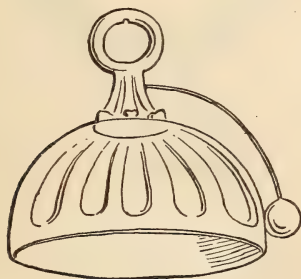


FIG. 60.

The bell itself is of clear cut glass; the fittings of metal. It will be observed that the hammer lies on the outside. To make the bell sound, the hammer must be lifted, and fall again. Fig. 61 shows how this is effected. The ring *a a* is hollow, as is also the shank *b b*. The stem *c*, which carries the hammer, forms the longer arm of a lever which works on a pivot at *d*, and whose

shorter arm terminates just over a slot cut crossways in the ring at *e*. For greater clearness, this lever is shown midway between its two alternative positions, but as a matter of fact, its shorter end normally lies close to the inner surface of the ring, in actual contact with the opening *e*. When the shorter arm of the lever is in this position, the stem *c* is likewise depressed,

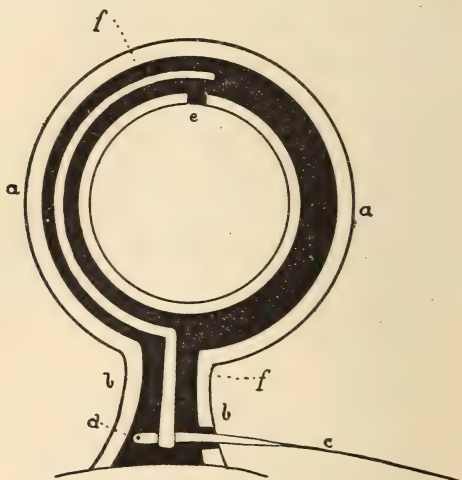


FIG. 61.

and the hammer lies in contact with the bell. But if the ring be now suspended on the hook, and the thread pulled, the pin, on rising out of the hook, compels a corresponding elevation of the lever *c*. The hammer is thereby lifted, and when the pull is again relaxed, it falls and strikes the bell. This may be repeated *ad libitum*, each pull causing a separate stroke. By arranging the pulls accordingly, the bell may be made to count up to any given number, or answer questions after the spiritualistic fashion with three for "yes," one

for "no," and "two" for "doubtful," or as may be arranged.

When showing the bell around for inspection, the performer naturally inserts his finger in the ring, thereby concealing the fact that there is a slot cut in it.

It should be mentioned that after working the bell in the manner above described, Hartz was accustomed to take it off the suspended hook, and to transfer it to another hook forming part of a light brass stand, placed upon the "run-down," where it still sounded as before. The "hook" in this case was on the same principle as that already described, but was worked by electricity, the general arrangement being the same as described in the case of his "Glove and Rings" trick, of which particulars are given in a later chapter.

The working of the Crystal Cash-box without electricity is effected in a very similar manner. The box is of bevelled plate-glass, set in a metal frame, and is about nine inches in length, six in breadth, and four in depth. It is suspended by a single ring in the centre of the lid, as shown in Fig. 62. This ring is attached to

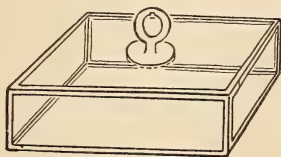


FIG. 62.

a circular plate, about an inch and a half in diameter. On opening the box a similar plate is seen on the inside of the lid. Between the two plates is a circular cavity cut through the thickness of the glass, forming a

receptacle to hold four half-crowns. The inner plate is in truth a movable flap working on a spring hinge, just strong enough to make it self-closing. The flap, when the coins are in position, is secured by a tiny catch, withdrawable by the same kind of mechanism in the ring as has been already described in the case of the bell.

The box being suspended on the hook, and set swinging, the performer at the right moment makes the motion of passing the visible coins into it. The line being pulled, the concealed substitutes fall into the box, those professedly thrown from the hand being vanished by means of the "tourniquet," or otherwise as may best suit the performer. The flap closes of its own accord. The coins taken from the box are of course exchanged for the borrowed coins (which have been duly marked) before they are handed for identification.

The special bird-cage trick I have mentioned is in effect as follows: A handsome cage of brass wire, circu-

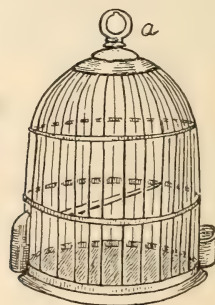


FIG. 63.

lar, with dome top (the familiar pattern of a canary-bird's cage, as in Fig. 63) has remained in full view, on

the floor at back of stage, from the commencement of the performance. The performer borrows a ring, which is loaded into a pistol. He then fetches the cage from the back, and suspends it from the hook, hanging, as usual, in the centre of the proscenium. The cage is obviously empty, nor apparently is there the smallest space wherein anything could be concealed, and yet, when the pistol is fired at the cage, a canary appears therein. Round the bird's neck is a ribbon, bearing the borrowed ring.

The secret lies mainly in the construction of the cage. The ring at top, by which it is suspended, rises from the centre of a circular plate three and one half inches in diameter. Immediately below this (see Fig. 64) is a cylindrical box *a*, three inches in diameter by one inch deep. This, like the coin cavity in the cash-box, is closed by a flap, *b*, working on a spring hinge just strong enough to keep it closed when empty, but yielding to the slightest pressure upon it. There is, however, a spring catch at *c*, which keeps *b* securely closed till such catch is withdrawn, for which purpose the ring at top contains similar mechanism to that described in the case of the bell and cash-box. This "top" fits into a circular space in the upper part of the bird-cage; and when dropped into position fixes itself securely by a self-acting catch on each side.

Used with this is a duplicate top, of precisely similar appearance, but having no mechanism whatever, and having no means of attachment to the cage, so that it simply lifts in and out of the circular space above mentioned. When the cage is first seen at the back of the

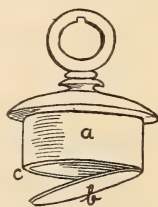


FIG. 64.

stage, this dummy top is in position. The other, which we will call the trick top, is behind the scenes.

It should here be explained that when Hartz, in his earlier days, was working a miscellaneous programme¹ on a stage of his own, he adopted to some extent the Robert-Houdin arrangement, though greatly simplified. In particular, he had a small table placed against the side scene. The end of this table farthest away from the spectators was open, and was so arranged as to form a small servante. Here the assistant was able, from behind, to place any article of which it was necessary that the performer should gain secret possession.

This arrangement is utilized for the purpose of the bird-cage trick. After the borrowed ring has been passed off by one or other of the means already described, the assistant attaches it to the neck of a canary and inserts the bird in the trick top of the bird-cage. This is then placed on the servante above mentioned. The performer, making some excuse to go to the side table, gets possession of it. He then proceeds to fetch the bird-cage, and, while stooping to pick it up, under cover of his own body removes the dummy top, and substitutes the faked top, which, as before mentioned, fixes itself. The trick is now done. He hangs the cage on the hook and fires the pistol at it. The assistant pulls the line. The catch is released, the flap *b* opens, the bird falls out by its own weight, and instinctively drops on the perch; while *b* closes again by the action of the spring.

¹ Now abandoned in favour of the one great production trick known as "A Devil of a Hat"; in which no other performer has ever attempted to compete with him.

It is obvious that the same principle might be applied to produce many other effects, say, the dropping of coins into a suspended glass. The manufacture of the apparatus in the first instance is a matter of great nicety, but, once properly adjusted, it is by no means likely to get out of order.

In connection with devices of general utility I must not omit to mention the

CHANGE (OR LOAD) FROM BACK OF ASSISTANT.

This is by no means an absolute novelty, for it will be found mentioned in connection with the "inexhaustible bottle" trick, in a series of papers on leger-

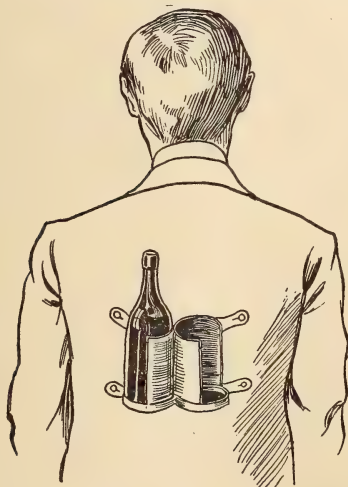


FIG. 65.

demain in Messrs. Cassell's *Popular Recreator*, first published, if I remember right, in 1873. Fig. 65 is

practically a reproduction of the illustration there given, which needs no explanation. Who was the originator of the idea I cannot say, but after remaining unused and generally unknown for a good many years, it has recently been revived, or re-invented, and employed with good effect in various tricks by two or three leading performers.

In order to cover the necessary passing of the performer's hand behind the back of the assistant, the latter should bring in something or other on a tray or plate, held with both hands before him. The performer, standing close beside him, takes this with the one hand, and with the other makes the desired "change."

Naturally the assistant must not turn his back to the spectators in leaving the stage. He must retire after a somewhat crab-like fashion, moving sideways. To facilitate this, he should make his appearance from a point as far back as possible, and his retreat at a point as far forward as possible, meanwhile advancing no farther from the wing than is absolutely necessary.

THE PNEUMATIC SUCKER.

This, though as yet but little used, promises to become a valuable aid to the sleight-of-hand conjurer.

Every schoolboy knows what a "sucker" is; viz.: a disc of sole leather with a string passing through its centre, and having, when wetted, the quality of adhering to any smooth surface against which it is firmly pressed, by reason of the weight of the atmosphere. It is some years since the principle was embodied in a little contrivance (a red rubber cup, to the convex side

of which was attached a hook) for suspending light articles against the glass of shop-windows.

It is only quite recently, however, that this useful principle has been pressed into the service of the conjurer. The credit of leading the way belongs, I believe, to our friends in America, to whom their brother wizards have been indebted for many ingenious contrivances. So far as I am aware, it is as yet only made use of for two purposes, viz.: for vanishing and reproducing a billiard-ball in the hand, and as the terminal of a pull. I have little doubt, however, that other uses will speedily be found for it.¹

For ball-conjuring purposes, the apex of the little rubber cup, or hollow cone, which is seven eighths of an inch in diameter, is furnished with a loop of gut, large enough to go easily over the forefinger. (See Fig. 66.)

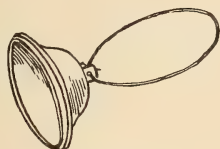


FIG. 66.

If the concave side of the cup is slightly moistened, a billiard-ball pressed against it will require a direct pull of considerable strength to dislodge it, though it may be detached in a moment by lifting the edge of the rubber with the thumb or finger.

If the loop be passed over the forefinger as in Fig. 67, the ball can be instantly transferred from the palm to

¹ For another suggested use of the same principle (the suspension of the servante), see *ante*, p. 21.

the back of the hand, and *vice versâ*, enabling the performer to show the hand empty, and yet the next moment to produce a ball from it.

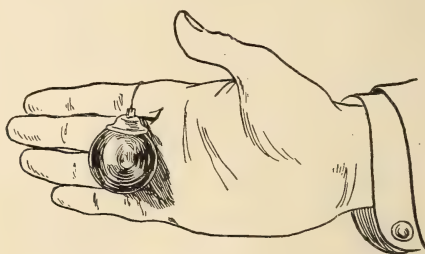


FIG. 67.

It should be mentioned that the sucker is only effective with objects having a polished or enamelled surface. With a cork ball, for instance, it would be quite useless, because the roughness of surface would prevent absolutely air-tight contact. For moistening the cup, by the way, glycerine is preferable to water; as from its viscid nature it tends to promote such perfect contact.

Where the sucker is used as the outer end of a pull, it is attached to about six inches of fine gut, and this again to a piece of cord, elastic or otherwise, according to the nature of the pull. It is most useful perhaps in connection with the well-known form of rubber pull in which the object to be vanished is drawn between the coat and vest of the performer, under the left arm. Such a pull, armed with a sucker, can be instantly attached to a billiard-ball, an egg, or a champagne tumbler,¹ and will vanish it in the most satisfactory manner.

¹ This particular vanish is a speciality of Mr. Maurice Garland.

It may also be used for coins, if they are well worn; with new ones its action is not quite so certain; especially if the sucker is applied to the obverse side, which in many coins, by reason of the intricacy of the pattern, has a rather rough surface.

THE BALL CLIP.

This (one of Messrs. Hamleys' specialities) is another very simple little piece of apparatus, but of great utility. It is of brass wire, bent and brazed into the form shown in Fig. 68, being practically that of a horse-shoe each of whose arms terminates in a hoop about one and three quarters of an inch in diameter, though the size may vary, according to the object to be supported. From the central point of the horseshoe projects a straight wire stem, the end of which is bent into a very sharp hook. This hook enables the performer to attach the clip behind a chair or table, or to any part of his own garments, the two rings receiving between them the billiard-ball, egg, or other like object which it is desirable to have instantly accessible. The ball is held in perfect security, and yet a touch dislodges it when needed.



FIG. 68.

THE VELVET CHANGING BAG.

I am again indebted to Messrs. Hamley for the knowledge of this, which is also one of their "specialities," and one of the most recent additions to the armoury of the magicians. Even the professional performer need not disdain, upon occasion, to avail himself of its assistance; while to the numerous class of amateurs who

put their trust in apparatus, rather than in their own skill, it should be extremely valuable.

In appearance (see Fig. 69) it is a handsome bag about five inches across by seven deep, of crimson velvet or plush, and mounted on a ring to which is attached a polished mahogany handle, about a foot long. The performer turns the bag inside out, revealing nothing but a very innocent-looking black lining. There is no sign of any inner pocket, or anything else of a suspicious character, but notwithstanding, articles dropped into the bag are changed in a most mysterious way. Thus a white ball dropped into the bag becomes a red one; a knotted cord is reproduced free from

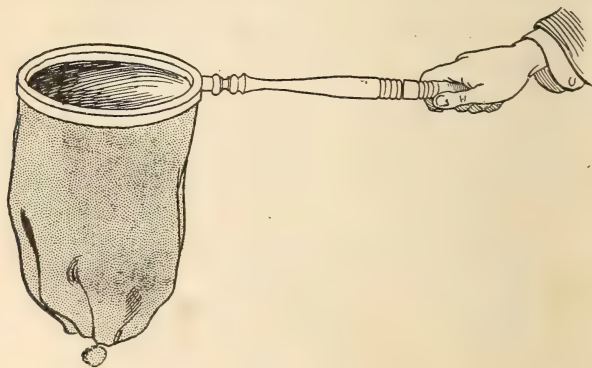


FIG. 69.

knots, while a damaged handkerchief entrusted to the keeping of the bag is instantly restored. In fact, there is scarcely any limit to the number and variety of the transformations that may be effected by its means.

An inspection of Fig. 70 will lead the reader half-way to a knowledge of the secret. This lies mainly in

the ring and handle, of which this diagram shows the construction.

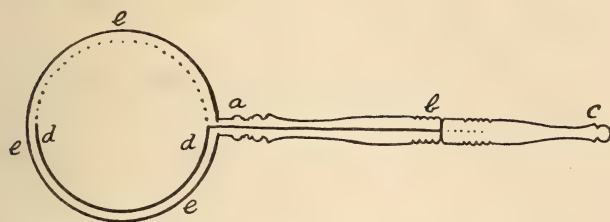


FIG. 70.

The handle, *a b c*, is in two portions, that between the points *a* and *b* being hollow. Through this portion passes a stiff wire rod, one end of which is firmly attached to the solid portion, *b c*, of the handle, and the other to one extremity of a half-ring, *dd*, the other extremity of such half-ring being pivoted into the whole ring, *eee*, so that, by twisting *b c* accordingly, this half ring can be brought to either side, as may be desired.

The bag, besides its lining proper, has also a half or dividing lining, the upper edge of which is stitched to the half-ring. This, therefore, when turned to the one side or the other, carries this inner lining with it, making it lie against the corresponding side of the bag.

We will suppose that a given article is privately placed in the bag, the half-ring being in the position shown in Fig. 70. A half-turn of *b c* causes the half-ring to perform a semi-revolution within the bag, shifting the false lining over to the opposite side; and shutting in the article just placed therein between the false and the true lining. The bag may now be turned inside out, and will appear to be empty. Some other article being borrowed and dropped in, and a half-turn in the

reverse direction given to the handle, this last article is in turn shut in between the false and the true lining, and that first put in is revealed, the one having apparently changed into the other.

The manifold uses of such an appliance are almost self-evident. These are by no means limited to ostensible transformations, for which indeed the bag should be but sparingly used. Its more artistic function is to effect secret changes, the article placed therein being exchanged for another of similar appearance, while the genuine one remains in the bag, to be carried off and dealt with as may be needful for the purpose of the intended *dénouement*.

CHAPTER III.

A SPECIAL TABLE AND SOME TRICKS PERFORMED BY ITS AID.

WITH the aid of the appliances described in preceding sections, the performer should, at any rate for a short drawing-room "show," require nothing further in the way of stage furniture. Where, however, he has a free hand as to his scenic arrangements, a table of his own is an immense assistance. I do not now refer to the imposing centre- or side-tables which were in vogue in the days of Robert-Houdin, or even to the less elaborate pieces of furniture which survived to the time when *Modern Magic* was written, and, to a certain extent, are even now used. Simplification is the order of the day, and the more completely a conjurer can, at any rate in appearance, abjure mechanical aids, the more highly will his performance be appreciated by experts. But he must have *something* whereon to place the various articles made use of in his show, and this being so obviously necessary, the use of a single small table, round or square, as the case may be, excites no suspicion.

The table I am about to describe I regard as one of the most valuable accessories, if not *the* most valuable, which a conjurer can possess. It is a good many years since it was first invented, but the few who were privileged to use it guarded the secret with almost masonic

caution, and it has till now remained practically unknown to the great majority of magical performers. It was the joint invention of Robert Heller, a brilliant performer now, alas! gone to his rest, and Professor De Vere, formerly well known as a magician and maker of 'conjuring apparatus in London.¹ I gained my knowledge of it from the latter, under a pledge of



FIG. 71.



FIG. 72.

secrecy, from which, fortunately for my readers, I am now released.

The table may be either of the "gipsy" form, as illustrated in Fig. 71, or mounted on a central pillar,

¹ Professor De Vere has so long disappeared from sight, so far as London is concerned, that I find a very general impression that he, too, has "joined the majority." I am happy to be able to correct that idea. Professor De Vere, after a sojourn of some years in Brussels, migrated to Paris, where he has acquired the good-will of the famous *ateliers* of Messrs. Tissot and Voisin, and is now doing a flourishing business (wholesale only) in the neighbourhood of the Folies Bergère.

as in Fig. 72. The first named has perhaps the advantage in point of portability, as the top may be made to lift off and the legs to divide at the centre; in which condition the whole may be packed into a very small compass. The table shown in Fig. 72 may also be made to take apart, but the process is a little more complicated. In either case the table top is of wood, covered with black velvet, on which is embroidered in narrow silk braid of some bright colour (yellow for choice) a geometrical pattern. The pattern shown in Figs. 71, 73

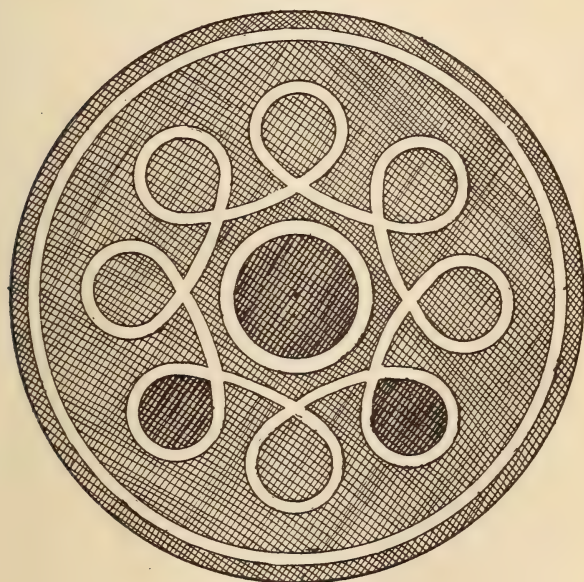


FIG. 73.

was devised by myself for my own use, and was found to answer the purpose extremely well. Figs. 74 and 75 depict other designs, which may be useful by way of



FIG. 74.

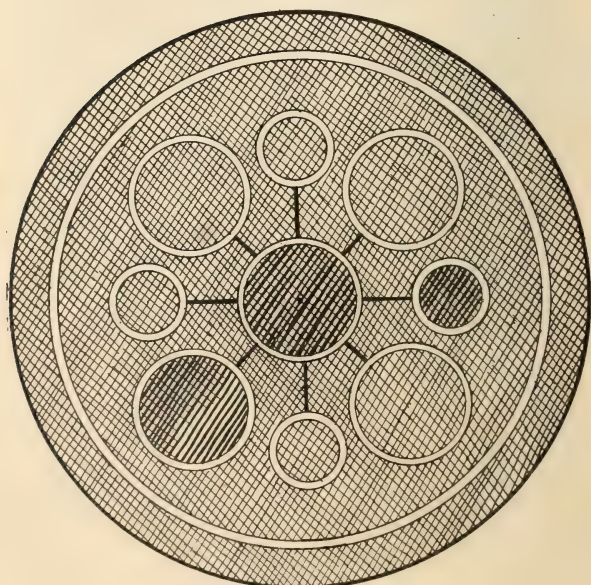


FIG. 75.

suggestion. Herein, however, the performer may follow his own fancy, so long as the table top is broken up by intersecting lines into spaces of a convenient size and shape to be treated as will presently appear. In one or more of such spaces, the velvet and the wood beneath it are cut away just within the braid, as shown by the darkened portions in the diagrams. A pocket of black velvet, about four inches deep, is then inserted into the space and its upper edges glued to the wood. It will be found that the opening thus made is, by artificial light, undistinguishable from the surface of the table, even at so short a distance as three or four feet; the effect to the spectator being that the surface is unbroken. A silk or woollen fringe, of the same colour as the braid, and five inches deep, round the edge of the table top, prevents the pocket being seen from below.¹

The performer has thus in effect one or more invisible holes in his table top. The expert will readily appreciate the advantages of such an arrangement. A billiard-ball, say, is placed close to one of the openings. The performer ostensibly picks it up, and comes forward with it to the spectators. As a matter of fact, just as the hand reaches it, a touch with the little finger sends it over the hole, and it falls noiselessly into the

¹ The pockets need not be left permanently open. Each piece of wood cut out of the table top should be carefully preserved, rubbed down with glass-paper, and covered with black velvet. Thus treated, it will form a sort of plug, whereby the hole whence it was taken may be closed at pleasure. The table in this condition may stand habitually in a drawing-room, without any one observing anything abnormal about it.

When giving a "show," only the pocket or pockets which the performer proposes to use should be opened, the others remaining closed.

pocket, the hand closing, apparently on the ball, in reality upon empty space.

I myself carried the idea a step farther, so as to make the table available for productions as well as disappearances. For this purpose the table was constructed as shown, in section, in Fig. 76. On the under

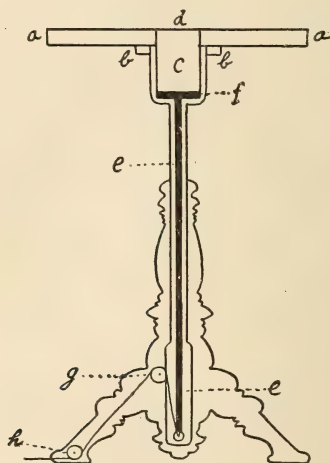


FIG. 76.

side of the table top, *a a*, is a wooden collar, *b b*. Into this fits a cylindrical cup, *c*, corresponding, as to internal diameter, with a circular opening, *d*, in the centre of the table top. This cup forms an extension of the supporting pillar of the table. Through the whole length of such pillar passes an iron rod, *e*, bearing on its upper end a wooden disc, *f*, forming a sort of piston loosely fitting the cup. The top of *f* is covered, as is also the inside of *c*, with black velvet, the central opening corresponding with the pattern on the table top. The outer edges of *f* are polished, to minimize friction.

To the lower end of the rod *e* is attached a cord ¹ passing over two pulleys, *g*, *h*, in the leg of the table, and thence passing through or across the stage to the hand of an assistant. When this cord is pulled *e* rises, bringing the disc or trap *f* flush with the surface of the table, and thus "producing" anything that may have been hidden within the cup.

When the pull is relaxed, the weight of the rod causes *f* to sink down again to its normal position.

A performer of any ingenuity will find almost unlimited uses for a table of this description. Thus, after vanishing a glass of water at some other part of the stage, he may turn a borrowed hat mouth downwards on the table, and cause the glass to reappear under the hat. Or, in place of the hat, he may spread a borrowed handkerchief over the table, then, nipping its centre between the finger and thumb, he may slowly raise it, the glass or other article rising simultaneously under cover of the cone thus formed. Again, placing a billiard-ball on the table just in front of the opening and gently fanning it, he may change it into two, the supplementary ball rising in the centre of the table under cover of the fan. Or, showing a red billiard-ball, and covering it with a handkerchief, held as above, he may change it to a white one, the red ball being got rid of into one of the side pockets; and the white one, under cover of the handkerchief, rising on *f* in its place. Or again, under cover of the fan the table may be made to cover itself and overflow with an almost incredible number of "spring" flowers (in the mechanical sense);

¹ What is known as "snood-line" is the best for any purpose of this kind. It is smooth, lissom, and compact, and works with a minimum of friction.

all that is necessary being to pack them, with due care, into the cup *c* beforehand.

If the performer prefers to work without an assistant, it would be an easy matter so to arrange the table that the pull should be brought into action by the release of a counterweight behind (or within) the pillar of the table.¹ In this case the trap would of course not sink down again, but in most cases it is better that it should not do so. Where (in the former working) it is desired to keep it elevated, this may be done by passing the cord round a cleat.

As a most valuable adjunct to the table in question, I may here take the opportunity of calling attention to

THE BOTTOMLESS TUMBLER.

This is an ordinary glass tumbler, from which the bottom has been cut out. I had a tumbler thus treated for my own use, and for some years believed myself to possess a monopoly of the idea. It has, however, for a long while past been common property; and in truth, the utility of such an appliance is so obvious that it may well have been invented, and re-invented, half a dozen times over.

To give an elementary example of its use; the glass may be held in the hand, either resting on the palm, or with a finger crossing the lower opening. A billiard-ball, say, is dropped into it, plainly in view. A borrowed handkerchief is now thrown over it, and the glass (with the other hand) placed on a table, the ball, ostensibly so safe within, being left comfortably

¹ This might take the form of a piece of leaden tube, encircling the centre rod.

palmed in the hand which first held the glass, to be disposed of at pleasure. An egg or a folded handkerchief may be dealt with in like manner.

The German magical serial, *Die Zauberwelt*, suggests a modification which appears to be, for certain purposes, an improvement; viz.: instead of removing the whole bottom of the glass, to remove the central portion only, leaving a rim, half an inch or so wide, all round. This reduction of the size of the opening permits of an egg being laid lengthwise in the tumbler, and shown round therein, without placing the hand beneath. The ends of the egg rest, so long as it is kept horizontal, on the edges of the opening, but the moment the glass is tilted, in ever so slight a degree, the egg falls through as readily as though the whole bottom of the glass were wanting. A gentle shake, professedly to show by the sound that the egg is still in the glass, will instantly dislodge it.

The glass may even be so arranged as to enable the performer to prove its unpreparedness by half filling it with water before showing the trick. To enable him to do this, the bottom of the tumbler must be ground mathematically flat, and a disc of thin glass cut precisely to the shape of the bottom. The glass, with its lower edges lightly smeared with vaseline, is then pressed down upon the loose bottom, which will adhere to it. The glass so arranged will be for the time quite water-tight, so long as the loose bottom is kept from shifting. A finger below the glass will make all secure in this respect. When the performer has poured away or drunk the water, it is but natural that he should wipe the glass, when the movable bottom may be left in the cloth used in the drying process.

I shall have more to say with regard to the bottomless tumbler in relation to "egg and handkerchief" tricks, when I reach the appropriate section. Its greatest value, however, is in connection with the table described in the earlier part of this chapter. Indeed, the one may almost be said to be the complement of the other, from the extraordinary facility the two combined afford for the "vanishing" of small objects. An egg or billiard-ball, say, is placed in the glass as it rests on the table beside one of the pockets, and the glass is covered with a handkerchief. (In such cases, by the way, it heightens the effect to secure the handkerchief by stretching a rubber band over it, round the rim of the glass.) The glass has then only to be moved an inch or so in the direction of the pocket; the article goes "down trap," and the glass is empty.

This, however, is only one of many uses. As a further illustration I cannot perhaps do better than describe a little trick of my own, which depends mainly on this particular combination. It appeared in my programmes as "Concatenation Extraordinary," and puzzled a good many, even of the initiated.

Its effect, baldly stated, is as follows: A number of metal links, iron or brass, are handed round on a small salver, with a request that some one in the audience will count them. They are found to number, say, thirty. The performer pours them into a tumbler which is standing on his table, and stirs them about with his wand. Then laying aside the wand, he dips the hand into the glass and takes out a link. Strange to say, another follows it, and another; the whole having somehow formed themselves into a chain. The links are counted, and the number found to corre-

spond with that of the loose links previously shown. The tumbler is turned upside down, and seen to be empty.

To prepare for the trick, get a piece of chain such as would be used to hold a good-sized dog, and about four feet in length. Divide this in half, and with a couple of pairs of pincers separate the links of one half, again bending back each link to its original condition, so that they cannot possibly again be joined without mechanical aid. The number of loose links must exactly correspond with those still connected. Attach to one end of the latter a black silk thread about two feet in length and place it in one of the pockets of your table, leaving the thread outside. Pass the latter from below upwards through the bottomless tumbler. Place this beside one of the pockets; then draw the thread till the uppermost link of the chain comes level with the surface of the table, and at the point where the thread, thus drawn taut, just reaches the edge of the table top, tie on it a small black bead. This done, release the thread and tie its free end to a nail-head or very small screw-eye driven into the edge of the table. Close beside this screw-eye (which should be on the right side of the table, as viewed by the audience) fix a tiny cleat. A lady's black dress-hook, pressed nearly flat, will answer the purpose, its object being merely to fix the thread when desired, instantly and securely, at the point indicated by the bead.

These preparations made, and the loose links duly laid on a plate or salver, with a second in reserve, the performer is ready to show the trick, which he may introduce somewhat as follows:

“You are probably aware, ladies and gentlemen, that

one of the favourite manifestations of the spiritualists is the passage of one solid body through another. It sounds rather mysterious, but I can assure you that it 's the easiest thing in the world, if you only know how it 's done.

"I have here a number of links of a chain,—thirty, to be exact¹—each one solid and separate. Will you kindly examine them, and see if, by any exertion of force, you can link two of them together. Count them, please, on to this other tray. You find exactly thirty? Good! Now, for the greater convenience of the spirits, we will place them in this tumbler." (He holds up the glass, a foot or so above the table, the loose thread not interfering with this, and replaces it, just in front of the pocket wherein the chain is.) "You know spirits always feel more at home in a tumbler. Take notice that I put the links fairly in the glass." (He drops them in, half a dozen at a time.) "Now we will stir them up a bit, so as to get them thoroughly mixed with the spirits. This gradually dematerializes them, in fact, they are getting soft already. Spirits do have that effect, particularly if you take too much of them."

During the delivery of the last few sentences the performer has taken up his position behind the table, and has been stirring the links with his wand, held in the right hand. Meanwhile the left hand gets hold of the thread, pulls on it till the bead comes in sight, and hitches this under the little cleat.

The thread, thus drawn taut, describes a straight line from the edge of the tumbler to the cleat. The performer now lays aside the wand, and dips his hand into the glass to take out a link. In so doing he

¹ Or whatever the actual number may be.

pushes the glass slightly backward so as to bring the lower edge of the tumbler just over the edge of the pocket. A slight pull or pressure with the left hand on the thread causes the end of the chain to rise through the loose links into the tumbler, where it is seized by the fingers of the right hand and drawn slowly up, the left hand meanwhile grasping the glass and moving it gently round and round, as if to continue the mixing of the links, but in reality to allow them to sink gradually down into the pocket of the table. The right thumb pushes the thread off the top link (the thread should be attached loosely with a view to this). The performer leaves the glass on the table, and brings forward the chain, that it may be examined, and the links counted. He may conclude with a mild joke, as follows:

“I have only been able this evening, ladies and gentlemen, to show you this experiment on a very small scale, but size is no object. If any gentleman will bring me some larger links,—the links of a chain cable, if he likes,—I shall be happy to unite them in the same manner. Did I hear somebody suggest golf links? Certainly, sir; nothing easier. You have only to bring them, any evening you like, and I will undertake to join them together.”

I may mention that by the aid of the mirror glass, described at p. 42 it is possible to produce a similar effect in a much simpler way. The glass must, in this case, be of the reversible kind, with double mirror; and the chain must be at the outset concealed in the hinder compartment. The performer, after the loose links have been examined, drops them, three or four at a time, into the front compartment. He then lifts the glass

and places a plate beneath, ostensibly to cut off all connection with the table. In so doing, he gives the glass the necessary half-turn. The chain is now in front, and may be produced at leisure, the glass being left apparently empty. The trick is in this case less convincing than by the original method, inasmuch as the glass cannot be turned upside down at its conclusion, but as, to the eye of the spectator, it appears clearly empty, this is not a very serious omission.

Or again, the trick being worked by the more elaborate method first described, the mirror glass may be utilized for an additional effect. The glass should in this case have in its hinder compartment a second chain, and, thus loaded, be placed on a second table, at some little distance. Having "joined" the first set of links and submitted the resulting chain for examination, the performer lays the latter, gathered up together, just in front of a second "pocket" in the table he has been using. Passing to the other table, he lifts up the loaded mirror glass, replaces it, without turning, and covers it with a handkerchief. Remarking that the chain is as yet so lightly materialized that it will pass just wherever he wishes, he picks it up, apparently, between his hands (really letting it fall into the table-pocket), and, advancing to the second table, holds the hands over the glass, and rubs them one against the other as if rubbing the chain away. After a few seconds, he shows the hands empty, and, nipping the partition through the handkerchief, lifts both together, revealing the chain in the glass. To produce the maximum of effect, the sleeves should be drawn back before (apparently) taking the chain in hand.

As in this case the reproduced chain is brought for-

ward in the glass, which is obviously without preparation, the audience are all the more firmly persuaded, if indeed they needed persuasion, that the glass first used was of the like innocent character.

While upon the subject of this particular trick, I may take the opportunity to describe yet another method, the invention of my friend Mr. David Devant, for producing a similar effect. The links are in this case of lighter make, being about the size of a finger-ring, nickel-plated, and brought in by the performer in a wine-glass, held in his right hand. He pours them out upon a tray. Then, taking them in the left hand, he drops them back again one by one, suggesting to the ladies that they will find this a very good way of working the familiar "loves me, loves me not" oracle. Having thus shown that the rings are unconnected, he transfers the glass to the opposite hand, and forthwith draws them out again in the form of a chain, leaving the glass empty.

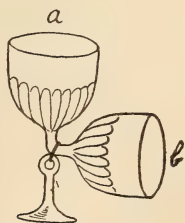


FIG. 77.

The secret lies in the glass, which has one foot only, but two bowls, as shown in Fig. 77. Each of the bowls, *a*, *b*, has about half an inch of stem, and these are fused together at right angles. At the upper part of the stem (in the foot portion) an eyelet is formed. To

L. of C.

connect the stem with the bowls, a piece of wire is passed through this eyelet, and round the two glasses at their point of juncture. A loose hinge, so to speak, is thus created between the two portions of the apparatus, and either bowl may in turn be made to take the vertical position, the other sticking out horizontally by its side, the foot portion remaining throughout perpendicular.

When the glass is first shown, the loose rings are in *a*, and the chain in *b*, which, the stem of the glass being held between forefinger and thumb, rests naturally within the hand, the palm closing its mouth. When the performer transfers the glass from hand to hand, he covers the mouth of *a* with the previously empty hand, and brings it quickly down into the palm, *b* in turn assuming the vertical position.

But to return to the Heller and De Vere table. Another effect, for producing which this and the bottomless tumbler co-operate very neatly, is the magical production of a rose. The performer takes a rose from his button-hole, and announces that he will pass it into the tumbler, which is seen standing on the table. The rose vanishes from his hands, but the tumbler remains empty, and there is a quiet smile at his expense. "Ah! you think I have failed," he remarks, "but that's a thing I never do. To pass the flower into the glass I was compelled to dematerialize it, and it will take a few moments to materialize it again." He raises the glass a few inches and replaces it, in order to emphasize the fact that it is empty. "The process is quickened by a current of air. Will somebody oblige me with the loan of a fan?" A fan having been procured, he proceeds

gently to fan the glass, wherein after a moment or two the rose appears. He takes it out, and presents it to the lender of the fan in acknowledgment of her courtesy.

With the reader's present knowledge, the trick will require but little explanation. There are two roses, as like each other as possible. The first the performer gets rid of by palming. The stalk of the second is passed into a small loop at the end of a black silk thread. Rose and thread are then lowered through the glass into one of the pockets of the table. (This pocket, by the way, must be of a size rather smaller than the circular opening at the bottom of the glass). The opposite end of the thread is led over the edge of the glass to the hand of an assistant behind the scenes. By gently pulling, he causes the rose to rise into the glass, the movement of the fan in front of it effectually masking the manner of its appearance.

It will be found a good plan to cover the mouth of the glass with a paper weight, or a small but heavy plate, professedly as an additional proof of "no deception," but in reality to keep the glass steady during the operation.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MAGIC WAND AND TRICKS THEREWITH.

THE PRODUCTION OF THE WAND.

THE wand being the symbol, and professedly the instrument, of the wizard's power, he cannot more appropriately commence his performance than by some feat which appears directly to attest its magical qualities. One of the most effective "manifestations" of this kind is to come forward empty-handed, and make the wand appear, so to speak, from nowhere. The arch-wizard Robert-Houdin has described a very simple method for producing this effect.¹ At one end of the wand is a minute metal ring, to which is attached a black thread, a trifle longer than the wand itself. The other end of the thread is fastened to the right sleeve of the coat, just inside the cuff. Thus attached, the wand rests (ring end upwards) within the sleeve, the performer of course taking care not to slope the arm downwards till the right moment. When he desires to make the wand appear, he has only to extend the arm with a quick outward sweep, when centrifugal force at once shoots it into his hand.

Where this method of production is adopted, it will be found an improvement to dispense with the little ring, and in place of it to bore a minute hole through

¹ *The Secrets of Conjuring and Magic*, pp. 302, 303.

one end of the wand from side to side. The thread (which should in this case be double the length of the wand) is passed through this hole, and its two ends, tied together, secured to the sleeve. When the loop thus formed is broken the wand will come away "all clear."

Another effective way of producing the wand is for the performer to draw it out of his purse, explaining that being in company with mixed gold and silver tends to keep up its magnetic force, or giving any other sham-scientific reason for adopting so peculiar a method of safe-keeping.

To produce the desired effect, all that is needed is a small purse of the "bag" kind (see Fig. 78), the lower

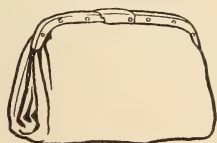


FIG. 78.

seam of which has been ripped open. The wand lies till needed in the left sleeve, kept from falling out by a slight flexure of the second and third fingers. The purse is placed in the trouser-pocket on the same side, with the open seam upwards. In the act of placing the hand in the pocket to take out the purse, the end of the wand is introduced into the opening. The purse being then shown, is opened in the ordinary way, and the wand taken out of it,—being in reality drawn through it. If the performer stands with his left side towards the spectators, and uses due care as to his position, the arm masks the wand, and no one can possibly see that it comes from the sleeve.

Another arrangement which may be adopted for magically producing the wand is to place it in a clear glass decanter on the performer's table, its upper end projecting above the neck. The wizard, on coming forward, finds that he has somehow mislaid the talisman without which he is powerless. He looks about on all sides, but in vain, till the wand itself calls attention to its presence by rising and falling an inch or so and so rapping inside the decanter. Delighted to regain the instrument of his power, the performer holds his hand ten or twelve inches above the decanter, simply saying "Come." The wand obeys, rising spontaneously into his hand. Wand and decanter may be submitted to the closest inspection, but nothing whatever is found to account for their remarkable behaviour, which to the uninitiated remains an inscrutable mystery.

The expert will appreciate the novelty of the effect, though it depends merely upon a new use of a very old friend of the wizard,—a black silk thread. The thread in this instance is attached to the lower end of the wand, the remainder of the silk being led away over the neck of the decanter, through an eyelet on the table top, to the hand of an assistant behind the scenes, who pulls as may be required. (See Fig. 79.)

The best method of attaching the thread is to pass it through the eye of a stout needle, making a knot on the opposite side. The needle, broken off to half its length, is then inserted into a hole, just large enough to receive it loosely, bored in the lower end of the wand in the centre of its circular section. (See detail diagram, A, Fig. 79.) While the thread is in operation this is perfectly secure, but the moment the wand is taken

hold of by the performer, the needle drops out by its own weight, and is drawn away with the thread.

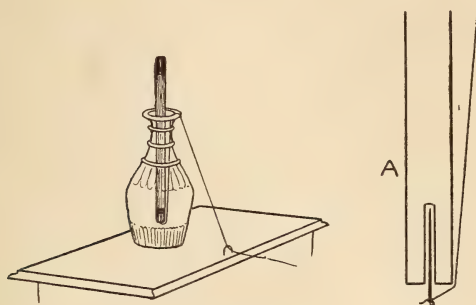


FIG. 79.

My readers will doubtless recall a very similar trick, in which an open penknife is made by the same means to rise and fall in a champagne bottle, but the application of the principle to the production of the wand is, I venture to believe, an entire novelty.

THE SELF-SUPPORTING WAND.

The performer having produced the wand, either by magical means, or by the more prosaic method of bringing it on openly with him, he may next proceed to demonstrate its mystic qualities. Here, by the way, he may take the opportunity to deliver, with all possible gravity, a little discourse of a pseudo-scientific character, say as follows:

“Many people imagine, ladies and gentlemen, that the conjurer’s wand is merely carried for the look of the thing, as ladies carry their fans, or life-guardsmen their ‘swagger-sticks.’ Allow me to assure you that such is not the case. The magic wand is made of a

very rare and peculiar description of wood, and possesses still more rare and exceptional qualities.

“The wood of which it is made is that of a particular kind of rose-tree. As you are no doubt aware, there are many descriptions of rose. In Africa, for instance, they have the red rose, the white rose, and the negroes. In England we have the primrose and the hedgerows. Herrings have hard roes and soft roes, and even in this room we have the front rows and the back rows. None of these, however, is the kind of rose I mean. Not to keep you longer in suspense, the wood of which the wand is made is that of the dog-rose, produced by grafting on an ordinary rose the hind leg of a healthy dog. It must be done in the dog-days, and the result will be the genuine magical dog-rose. I have never seen it growing, but I am told that you can always distinguish it by the peculiarity of its ‘bark,’ and by the fact that its branches are not mere ordinary boughs, but bow-wows. It is of the wood of this remarkable tree—this ‘rum shrub,’ if I may be permitted the expression—that magic wands are made. In fact, any other wood wouldn’t do.

“I am sorry to perceive a sceptical expression on some of your faces, and I am almost afraid you don’t quite believe what I am telling you. However, even if you doubt my statement as to the origin of the wand, I can easily satisfy you as to its extraordinary properties.

“Among other peculiarities, it is extremely sensitive to animal magnetism. This, no doubt, is on account of the amount of dog in the rose, and the fact leads to some very curious results. For instance, you have all heard of the law of gravitation, meaning, in plain lan-

guage, that if you don't hold a thing up it will fall down. If an old lady drops her umbrella in the street, you will often hear her exclaim, 'Oh! law!' an instinctive tribute, though she may not know it, to the law of gravitation. Everything on earth is subject to that law, except—the magic wand.

"See, I merely make one or two mesmeric passes over it, and then let go. Anything else would fall, but the wand remains suspended by magnetic attraction, floating in air without any support. (See Fig. 80.)

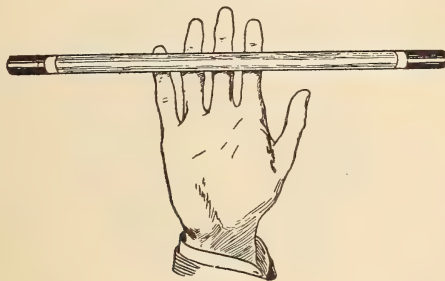


FIG. 80.

I take it between my finger and thumb, so; I open them, but it still hangs suspended, this time in a vertical position. (Fig. 81.) Right hand, left hand, it is all the same thing. If the influence is strong enough, actual contact with the hands may even be dispensed with. I can place any object, this tray for instance, between, and you see that the wand still remains suspended. (Fig. 82.)

"To prove to you that this effect is not produced by any mechanical means, any one is welcome to take the wand and tray straight from my hands, and to examine them as freely as he pleases.

"As long as the animal magnetism lasts, the effect will continue, but the strain on the will is too great to be kept up for any length of time.

"Pray, don't imagine that this is a trick, ladies and gentlemen. I have merely shown you this little experiment to prove to you that this is a real magic wand. I shall show you much more surprising things presently."

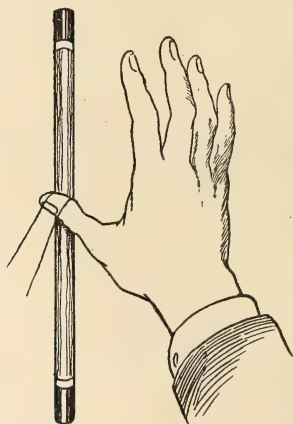


FIG. 81.

There are several ways of suspending the wand. I speak under correction, but I believe I may claim to have been the first to produce the effect with the wand in general use by the performer. The trick was originally exhibited by the Fakir of Oolu (Professor Sylvester) as an introduction to his Aërial Suspension. He used a light rod of black wood, about two feet in length. The secret, in his case, lay in the fact that at certain points in such rod were inserted short pieces of black wire, projecting from it about five eighths of an

inch; not quite at right angles to it, but each pair sloping slightly inwards towards each other. By laying the hands on the rod, and spreading the fingers between these points, a hold was obtained which made its horizontal suspension a very easy matter, or it could be suspended vertically by hitching one of the projecting

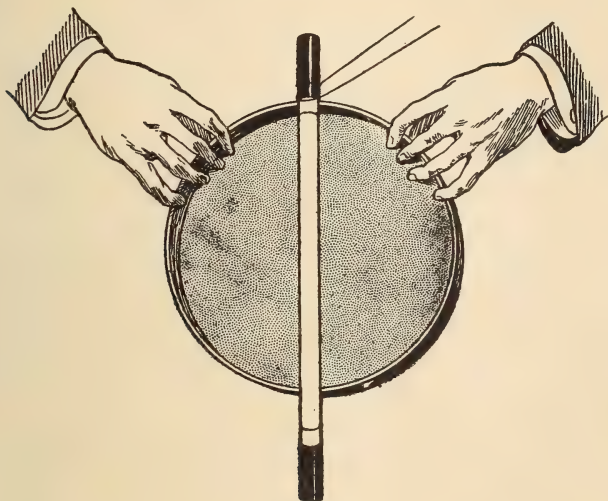


FIG. 82.

points over the thumb or a finger. Of course a rod so prepared could not be handed for inspection.

In another form of the trick, spring clips, sometimes one only, sometimes two, shaped as represented in Fig. 83, duly blackened, and lined with black velvet, took the place of the fixed points. These could be slipped on and off the wand at pleasure, allowing of its being offered for examination, and in use served the same purpose as the wire points in Sylvester's version.

In a third form of the trick, worked with a walking-stick, the secret consisted in a piece of black silk thread attached to the stick at two points, a few inches apart,

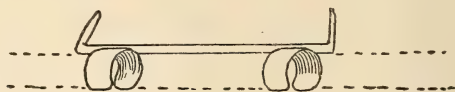


FIG. 83.

the fingers being passed within the bight thus formed. Naturally, a stick so prepared could be suspended in various ways, but it could not be examined. To meet this difficulty, it was brought on in a wooden case which also contained an unprepared duplicate. This was first taken out and offered for examination, then put back in the case, and therein mechanically "changed" for the prepared stick, the arrangement being an admirable illustration of "how *not* to do it" in the presentation of a trick.

A better plan, which held the field for some time, was to have an endless loop of black silk thread, of suitable length, passed over the performer's head, and hanging down over his breast. The wand, being passed half-way through this, was pressed by the thumb and fingers of one or both hands against the silk, and so held in any desired position, much care, however, being needed in manipulation, lest the black thread should become visible against the white shirt-front.

Another method was to have the thread attached by one end to the left wrist, and thence led up the left sleeve across the back, and down the right sleeve, terminating in a loop, which was passed, till needed, over the thumb. In showing the trick, the thumb was

withdrawn, and the wand passed within the loop in its place. The tension of the thread was in this case governed by the position of the arms, the length being so regulated that, at the close of the trick, a complete extension of the arms should draw the loop out of sight, within the right sleeve.

The methods above described are interesting as showing the gradual development of the trick, but all have their drawbacks, and may now be considered obsolete, the method I am about to describe producing the desired effect in a much more complete and satisfactory manner. The silk thread is still used, but in a different and more artistic way.

A needle being threaded with the silk, which should be between four and five feet in length, is then passed through the front of the performer's vest from within, on the right-hand side, at a point about level with the chain-hole, and an inch or so from it. When the needle comes through, it is again inserted an inch and a quarter below its point of exit, and passed through to the inside. The needle is now removed, leaving both ends of the thread hanging down inside the vest. These are tied together, and to them is attached a little cylindrical weight, about one and a half inches in length by three quarters of an inch in diameter, rounded at top and bottom to minimize friction.¹ This being allowed to slip down the performer's trouser-leg and the vest buttoned, he is ready to show the trick.

While delivering his introductory remarks, he holds

¹ The best way to make the weight is to fill a short length (say two and one half inches) of brass tube with molten lead, and file down the ends to the desired shape, finally inserting into one end a brass screw eye, whereto to attach the thread.

the wand horizontally before him between the hands, supported by the pressure of the fingers on either end. In the course of his patter, the right thumb is slipped under the small portion of silk thread which lies outside the vest, and draws the thread out far enough to enable him to pass the wand within the loop thus formed. By pressing the wand outward against the silk with one or both hands (see Figs. 80, 81), he can now hold it suspended in any desired position.

The thread cannot be seen at a short distance, even against a wand of light colour. If the wand is black, or has black mounts, and the thread is made to lie accordingly, it is absolutely invisible.

An especially good effect is produced by replacing the thumb by a circular Japanese tray, as shown in Fig. 82. One or the other hand being then shifted, and grasping wand and tray together, tilts them into a horizontal position, and offers them for examination, the tilting movement causing the thread to slip spontaneously off the end of the wand. The weight, being considerably heavier than the wand itself, keeps the thread constantly taut, however long or short the distance to which it may for the time being be extended. As soon as the wand is removed, the thread is again automatically drawn close up to the vest.

By the use of a little subsidiary sleight, the effect of the trick may be greatly enhanced. If the wand is sufficiently light (I have one made hollow for this particular purpose), it may with a little practice be held at the extreme tips of the fingers of one hand, without any mechanical aid. To compass this, spread the fingers as widely apart as possible, the tips of the second and third lying *upon* the wand, and drawing it to

you, the tips of the first and fourth *against* the wand, pressing it in the opposite direction. By means of these opposite pressures, a slight but sufficient grip is obtained, and the wand thus held may be waved about in various directions. The thumb takes no part in the operation.

If the experimenter's second and third fingers are long in proportion to the other two, he will find this sleight very easy. If, on the contrary, the four fingers are pretty nearly alike in length, it will be found proportionately difficult, as also if the hand is naturally dry. A touch of glycerine on the finger-tips, promptly wiped off again, will, however, neutralize the latter disability, and will in any case materially facilitate the performance of the trick.

It is obvious that this mode of sustaining the wand does not allow it to be suspended in the variety of ways available by the thread method, but its special value is that in this case the performer can walk down among the spectators and allow them to take the wand directly from his hands, again "suspending" it the moment it is returned to him. Seeing clearly that in this instance no mechanical aid is employed, they are led, by conjurer's logic, to the conviction that such has been the case throughout.

As an appropriate sequel to the suspended wand effect, I will here describe a little illusion of my own, viz.:

THE RAPPING WAND.

As a further proof of the magical properties of the wand, the performer states that it will answer (by

rapping on the table) any questions put to it, provided only that they be such as can be answered by a simple "Yes" or "No." Three raps signify "Yes," and one rap "No"; while two mean "Doubtful" or "Ask me an easier one," after the approved spiritualistic fashion.

To prove that the wand has no mechanical connection with the table, the operator brings forward and hands for examination an ordinary Japanese tray, circular, and in diameter about a couple of inches less than the length of the wand. (If this same tray has been already used in the course of the "suspension" of the wand, so much the better.) This, when returned, he places on the table, and lays the wand upon it, one end in the tray, the other projecting over the opposite edge in the direction of the spectators. (See Fig. 84.) He



FIG. 84.

himself stands quite away from it, and puts such questions as may be desired, the wand replying by raising its forward end a couple of inches, and bringing it sharply down again on the edge of the tray. It will rap out numbers in like manner. If the performer is

expert in card-conjuring, the suit and value of a forced card may be thus named, with very good effect. The wand may be asked in how many years or months a given lady or gentleman will be married; how many children they will be blest with, and so on, the answers being given with all possible promptness; though, as prophecies, they may be a little unreliable. At any moment the wand and tray may be handed for examination, but the utmost acuteness will not detect anything abnormal about them.

The secret lies in the apparently unimportant fact that there are a couple of lighted candles on the table, about two feet apart, one on each side the tray (see Fig. 84). In one of the candlesticks (which should be fairly heavy) at a height of about three inches from the table is fixed a little hook, with its extremity pointing straight upwards. In the other candlestick, at the same height, is a little brass eyelet, say an eighth of an inch in internal diameter. A loop is made in the end of a piece of fine black silk, and passed over the hook. The other end is threaded through the eyelet of the other candlestick, and carried "behind the scenes" (which may be anywhere out of sight) to the hands of an assistant. When the performer is about to place the tray on the table the assistant draws the thread tight, giving room for the tray to be passed underneath it. This is done in such manner that three fourths of its diameter lie behind the thread. The thread is then slackened, and the wand laid upon the tray at right angles to the thread, its forward end projecting as already described. The assistant now produces the raps, as desired, by alternately pulling and slackening the thread.

At the close of the trick the performer moves the candlesticks a little farther apart, or nearer together, and in so doing detaches the loop from the hook, when the thread may be drawn away altogether by the assistant.

This trick figured in my programmes as "The Divining Wand—A R(h)apsody." It will be obvious that there are many other ways in which the intelligence of the wand may be tested; *e. g.*, to make it declare the throw of a pair of dice, the order in which numbers are arranged in a box, etc.

THE AUTO-GRAVITY WAND.

The special wand which bears this imposing title is the invention of Dr. Elliott, a well-known and very ingenious American conjurer. It is a metal tube, *a, b*,¹ divided internally, as shown in section in Fig. 85, by

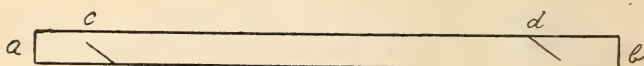


FIG. 85.

the sloping partitions *c, d*, into three compartments. The partitions, it will be observed, do not extend quite across the wand, but leave narrow passage-ways between the centre and end compartments, such passages being on opposite sides of the wand. Within the tube is a small quantity of mercury, which, according to the direction in which the wand is sloped, may at

¹ Dr. Elliott himself describes the wand as of metal, but, in view of the corrosive effect of mercury on most other metallic substances, I should imagine that wood, or even *papier mâché* would be a more satisfactory material. If the wood be of a fairly tough kind, a skilful turner would find no difficulty in boring it as desired.

pleasure be made to take up its position in either of the three compartments. If allowed to run, say into the end *a*, it is obvious that that end will become materially the heavier, and the wand may be balanced on the finger, or on the back of a book, after the unnatural fashion shown in Fig. 86. By letting the mer-

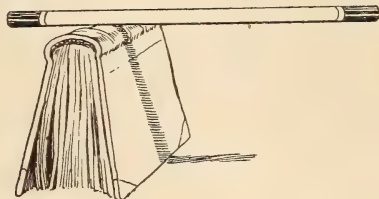


FIG. 86.

cury run to the opposite end, that end will in turn become the heavier.

A curious effect may be produced by laying down the wand with its loaded end on a table or chair, three parts of its length projecting beyond the edge, in impudent defiance of the law of gravitation.

It need hardly be said that the performer should take an early opportunity of exchanging the wand for one of similar appearance, but less abnormal in its construction, as it cannot well be handled without betraying its secret.¹

¹ Since the foregoing description was written, I have seen at Messrs. Hamleys' *depôt* a wand in which the same effect is produced in a much simpler manner, and which can consequently be produced at much less expense. The wand is in this case of *papier mâché*, and is merely a hollow tube, closed at each end, with a cylindrical leaden plug, about two and one half inches long, fitting loosely within it. If either end of the wand is depressed, the weight naturally slides down to that end, and the same effects, as to balancing it in eccentric positions, can be produced with it as with the more expensive wand.

THE CLIMBING RING.

Some years ago I invented a stage trick to which I gave the name of "The Spiritualistic Ball and Ring."¹ The apparatus consisted of a rod of wood or metal, rising perpendicularly from a heavy stand or foot; a wooden ball, with a bore through its centre a trifle larger than the rod, and a wooden ring, of the kind used with curtain poles. Each item was submitted to the closest examination, and yet, on the performer dropping either the ball or the ring over the upright, it would rise, fall, or stop half-way as it might be commanded.

The secret lay in the fact that the performer, immediately before dropping the ball or ring (whichever was first used) over the upright, privately attached to the top of this latter one end of a silken thread, the opposite end of which was in the hands of an assistant behind the scenes. The ball in falling down the rod carried down with it the slack of the thread, by pulling which it could be made to rise or fall at pleasure. A wizard of a younger generation, Professor Ellis Stanyon, has recently devised a simpler but not less effective form of the same trick, which in its new shape may be offered as a further proof of the extraordinary properties of the magic wand.

The wand in this case (see Fig. 87) takes the place of the fixed upright, and a borrowed finger ring that of the wooden ring used in the older trick. The thread may be connected with the wand in various ways, but one of the best, in my opinion, is to use a wand made after a frequent magical pattern, with a nickel-plated mount

¹ See *More Magic*, p. 395.

at each end. A cap, of very thin metal, and plated in like manner, as *a* in the diagram, is made of such a size as to be easily slipped over the mount, *b*. When in position it does not alter the appearance of the wand, and is therefore not noticeable, even at close quarters. At one side of this cap, near the closed end, is found a minute hole, through which is threaded a piece of fine black silk, a little longer than the wand, secured by a knot on the inside. The opposite end of the thread is attached to the lowest button of the performer's vest. The cap, till needed, may be tucked under the vest, or lie hidden just inside the vest pocket.

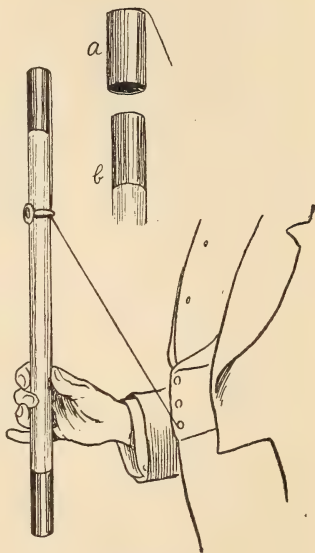


FIG. 87.

Having handed the wand for examination, the performer gets the cap into his right hand, and when the wand is returned to him slips its lower end into it. He then takes the wand (by the opposite end), in the left hand, so that the cap is now on its outer end. The slack of the thread is secured by the thumb, and, lying along the wand, is invisible. Holding the wand with the cap end upwards, he advances to the holder of the borrowed ring, and invites him to drop it over the top. The trick is now practically done. The thumb having released the thread, by moving the wand a little farther from the body the thread is tautened, and the ring rises, as

shown in the figure. By bringing the wand nearer to the body the thread is slackened, and the ring sinks again. The wand may, for the sake of variety, be held by the top instead of the bottom. The effect is the same. By making professed mesmeric passes over it with the opposite hand, the slight backward or forward movement is completely disguised.

By way of finish, the left thumb again secures the thread. The outer end of the wand is lowered, the ring is allowed to slide off it into the right hand, and returned to the owner. The right hand then seizes the wand by the "cap" end, and offers it for renewed examination. The act of taking it draws off the cap, which remains in the hand, and is got rid of without difficulty.

If the performer uses a wand with ebony ends, black japan may be used for the cap in place of nickel-plating. As an alternative to the use of the cap, the necessary connection of the thread to the wand may be made by means of a needle attached to the thread, and dropped into a hole in the upper end of the wand, just reversing the arrangement of the wand rising in the decanter. (See p. 104.) The needle in this case, however, should not be broken, as the point enables it to be stuck till needed in some convenient part of the performer's clothing.

THE RISING AND FALLING WAND.

The same arrangement of the wand may by a slight alteration in working be made to produce the reverse effect; viz., a borrowed ring being held stationary between the finger and thumb, and the wand passed

within it, the wand may be made to rest suspended without visible support, or to rise and fall at command.

The wand being attached to the body by means of the cap and thread, as already described, is passed vertically downwards through the ring, but the end to which the thread is attached is in this case *undermost*. The ring now forms a fixed fulcrum, against which the thread works. By holding the ring so that the thread shall be just taut, the wand is kept stationary. By increasing or diminishing its distance from the body, it is made to rise or fall as desired.

A word of caution may here be desirable. The wand should not be raised so high as to make its longer half, and consequently the greater portion of its weight, be above the ring, or it will topple over, and thereby "give away" the trick.

Another ingenious, but to my own mind not quite so satisfactory, rising wand is constructed as follows: The wand is hollow, with a movable cap on each end. This is of thin brass, nickelled, with a ring of the same material and depth beneath it, so that, whether the cap be on or off, the appearance of the wand is the same.

To the centre of each cap on the inside is soldered an eyelet, and these two eyelets are connected within the wand by a piece of thin rubber, of such a length as to lie straight between them, but not drawn taut, when the caps are in position.

When the performer desires to demonstrate the magical quality of the wand, he takes it upright by the lower end in, say, the left hand, and secretly taking off the lower cap, passes it between the first and second fingers to the outside of the hand. With the other

hand he then presses the wand down in a vertical direction as far as it will go, holding it down against the pull of the elastic by the grasp of the left hand.

With the opposite hand he then begins to make mesmeric passes over it, at the same time ordering it to rise, which the gradual relaxation of the fingers allows it to do. When it has reached its full elevation he replaces the cap on the lower end, and proceeds to use the wand for some other trick.

SPECIAL WANDS FOR VARIOUS PURPOSES.

WANDS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF HANDKERCHIEFS.

Two or three forms of wand have been devised for the magical production of a small silk handkerchief, to be subsequently used in the performance of some other trick.

One such wand consists of a thin metal tube, japanned or otherwise ornamented to match the wand in ordinary use. One end is permanently closed; to the other is adapted a metal plug (see A in Fig. 88) on the under side of which is fixed a tiny hook. The handkerchief to be produced is worked carefully into the wand, corners first. When the centre is reached, this is attached to the little hook, and the stopper replaced. By secretly withdrawing it at the proper moment, the performer gets the handkerchief into the hand without difficulty.

Another and better pattern only differs from the above in the fact that a minute eyelet is substituted for the little hook, and the handkerchief is attached to it by a loop of thread, which is broken after the handkerchief has been produced.

The method of using wands of these makes is as follows: The performer borrows a handkerchief and receives it (or places it) with its centre on the prepared end of the wand, which is held upright in, say, the right hand. With the opposite hand he nips the centre



FIG. 88.



FIG. 89.



FIG. 90.

of the borrowed handkerchief and draws it off the wand, carrying off within it the little plug and the handkerchief attached thereto, which now hangs down inside the borrowed one. The wand, with its open end to the rear, is tucked under the right arm. The borrowed

handkerchief is shaken a little, and then turned over, revealing the silken one within it. The two are now displayed one in each hand, after which it is an easy matter to detach the plug and to restore it to its normal position in the end of the wand.

A third wand is constructed on the "pop-gun" principle, as illustrated in Fig. 89. Here *a* is a short tube, open throughout, and fitting on to one end of the wand, which is at that part turned thinner, as *b*, in order to receive it. The wand is prepared for use by drawing this little tube half-way off the wand, and loading the handkerchief into it; the performer concealing the temporarily altered appearance of the wand by keeping that end in the hand. When it is desired to produce the handkerchief, pressure on the opposite end drives the tube home, and forces the handkerchief into the hand, while the wand reassumes its normal appearance.

Wands of one or other of the above kinds are frequently used in a modern version of the old trick of "the handkerchief burnt and destroyed," to supply the performer with the little bit of cambric which is required for the purpose of the illusion.

A fourth wand for similar purposes consists of a metal tube (*a*, in Fig. 90) duly japanned and nickelled, in one end of which is inserted, for the reception of the handkerchief, a smaller tube *b*, about two and one half inches in length, open at its inner end, but closed at its outer end by a disc of metal a shade larger in diameter than the wand itself, the projecting edge enabling it to be instantly withdrawn, say under cover of passing the wand from one hand to the other. A slot, half an inch wide, is cut in the side of *b*, to facilitate the extraction of the handkerchief.

When *b* is withdrawn, the end of *a* naturally remains, for the time being, open; but a little caution will prevent this being noticed.

The same wand is also used for the purpose of "vanishing" a handkerchief, which is in such case coaxed into the tube *b* under cover of rubbing it between the hands. The handkerchief is placed, say, apparently in the left hand, and the wand taken in the right; in which the loaded tube remains. A wave of the wand, and the handkerchief has disappeared, after which a very small amount of dexterity suffices to return the tube into the wand, when both hands can be shown empty.

Where the wand is to be used for this latter purpose only, the slot in the side of *b* is not necessary.

Such appliances are useful in their way, particularly to such performers as fear to trust to the subtler magic of their own fingers, but the expert will find it just as easy, with a little address, to produce the handkerchief from the wand in ordinary use, without any adventitious aid. To effect this, the handkerchief, first twisted ropewise, should be wound as tightly as possible round one end of the wand, the final "end" being tucked in, with the aid of a small paper-knife or other convenient instrument, behind the inner folds, in which condition the handkerchief forms a compact little ball.

The performer comes forward with the wand (handkerchief end) in his right hand. In the course of his "patter" he transfers this end to a temporary resting-place under his left arm, while he draws up his sleeves, incidentally showing both hands empty. He then grasps the projecting end with the left hand, and

instantly transfers the opposite end to the right, which moves to meet it, thereby masking the presence of the rolled-up handkerchief. This he forthwith slides, still covered by the hand, to the centre of the wand. For the final production, he has only to slip the handkerchief off the wand, and shake it out.

In this connection it may be worth while to inform the reader

HOW TO CHANGE THE WAND INTO A HANDKERCHIEF.

This affords a neat method of reproducing a small silk handkerchief, after it has been vanished at an earlier stage of the trick. (See *post*, "Handkerchief Tricks.")

Take a slip of white paper (printing paper will be found the best for the purpose) five inches in width, and about three inches longer than the wand you are accustomed to use. Roll this round the wand and fasten it off with little dabs of paste or gum at intervals along the edge.

When the paste has dried, remove the wand, and into the paper tube thus formed introduce, with the aid of a pencil, the handkerchief which you propose later to produce. Push the handkerchief well towards the middle of the tube, leaving the ends open.

The tube thus prepared is to be placed behind the table, supported on a couple of hooks, screwed into the back, as in Fig. 91.

It will be observed in the diagram that a second pair of hooks, at a slightly higher level, is for the time being vacant. The only further requirement is a second piece of paper like that of which your tube is formed,

with one of its longer edges freshly gummed (so as to be still sticky) for about half an inch throughout its length.

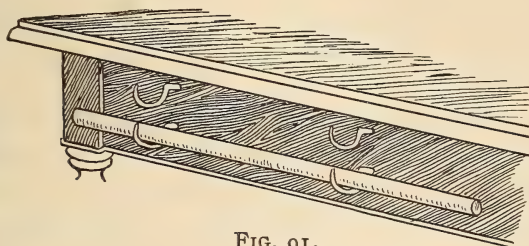


FIG. 91.

When you desire to show the trick, you make some sufficient excuse for wrapping up the wand. You show the piece of paper, and, standing behind your table, lay it down with the gummed edge upwards and close to the hinder edge of the table.

Wrap up the wand in this, starting at the side remote from you, and rolling it, with the paper round it, towards you with the fingers, till it reaches the edge of the table, where it is received by the vacant pair of hooks, while the thumbs, which come naturally below the table top, lift the tube containing the handkerchief into its place, the gum meanwhile keeping the paper round the wand from unrolling. The change is so natural and so instantaneous that no uninitiated person is in the least likely to suspect it.

You now turn in the paper tube at each end, as if to secure the wand which it is supposed to contain, and ask some spectator to hold it horizontally between the two forefingers above his head. Holding it in this manner he is unable to judge either of its weight or its solidity.

A little further patter follows, as may be appropriate to the trick, after which you take it from him, tear off the paper, and show the handkerchief. The wand (really a duplicate) may be reproduced from the performer's pocket, or from the sleeve *à la* Robert-Houdin, as described at page 102.

Another effective way of reproducing the wand is from a conical paper bag, previously formed under the eyes of the spectators from a plain piece of paper. For this variation the performer will require a duplicate wand, made hollow at one end, the cavity being of such a size as to fit the third finger. This is at the outset laid upon the upper pair of hooks (shown vacant in Fig. 91) with the open end lying to the performer's right hand, as he faces the company. The piece of paper to form the bag should be six to eight inches in width, and in length three or four more than the wand.

The performer, stepping behind his table, picks up the piece of paper, and shows both sides of it. He then lays it down again with its hinder edge projecting a little beyond that of the table, while he shows his hands empty, and draws up his sleeves. He then again picks up the paper, using the right hand, and in so doing inserts the third finger into the open end of the wand, which he is thereby enabled to bring up behind the paper. It now becomes an easy matter to form the paper cone with the wand inside it, after which the smaller end of the cone is twisted, and the upper edges folded down. This is of course done before the wand shown is wrapped in the other piece of paper, so that the two hooks are again left vacant for use as already described.

The insertion of the finger into the wand will be

facilitated by having a nail or needle-point driven into the back of the table, level with the hooks, for the solid end of the wand to butt against.

The most difficult part of the trick is to find a reasonable excuse for wrapping up the wand. One plan is to treat the so doing as a concession to the audience, who (as you take for granted) are by this time satisfied that *with* the wand you can do anything you please, so—on this occasion only—you propose to do without it, wrapping it up to keep it out of mischief.

Another *mise en scène* for the trick is to pretend that you are about to make a present of the wand to some spectator. In this case the handkerchief is omitted, and when the paper tube is torn apart by the spectator he finds it empty, the wand having found its way back to the possession of the performer. After this proof of its fidelity he naturally has not the heart to part with it, and the spectator is compelled to dispense with the intended gift.

Instead of at once handing the supposed wand in its envelope to the spectator, and allowing him to open the paper, the performer may remark: "But perhaps this will be inconveniently long for the pocket; I had better make it smaller for you." So saying, he clips one end of the paper tube between the first and second fingers, and with the other hand rolls it into a coil round these fingers, the paper cylinder flattening as pressure comes upon it. By the time the coil is complete it is abundantly clear to the audience that the wand has somehow escaped from its envelope, and it only remains for the performer to reproduce it elsewhere, as may best suit him.

A WAND FOR THE PRODUCTION OF CIGARS.

The principle of the "half-crown wand," viz., the extrusion of an object concealed within the outer end of the wand by means of a sliding piston within it, has been ingeniously applied to the magical production of cigars. In this case, in place of the half-crown, the piston terminates in a stout needle, which, when the piston is pushed forward, projects a couple of inches or so beyond the end. When the piston is drawn back, the needle disappears within the wand.

To prepare the wand for use, a cigar, of small size, is impaled upon the needle, and drawn back within the wand. Within easy reach of his left hand, either in a pochette or under the vest, the performer has another cigar, of precisely similar appearance.

Holding the wand so that its open end shall not be noticeable, he may lead up to the trick by a few remarks on the so-called "divining" wand, and the quality claimed for it of "dipping" when the holder approaches water-springs or minerals, however deeply hidden beneath the surface of the earth. He informs the company that the wand he holds possesses a similar quality, but in a somewhat different way, the attractive force being in this case exerted by tobacco, and the wand becoming heavier whenever it is brought into the near neighbourhood of the soothing weed.

To prove his assertion, he places the tip of a forefinger on each end of the wand, and holding it horizontally before him, advances to some gentleman of the company (preferably one whom he knows to be a smoker), and suddenly lowers the wand, as if involuntarily, a couple of inches. "Sir, I feel the wand is get-

ting heavier. Am I right in supposing that you have tobacco or cigars about you?" If the answer is in the affirmative, he passes on, with a smile of satisfaction, to some other gentleman, continuing in the same way till he comes to some one who declares, in spite of the evidence of the wand, that he has nothing in the shape of tobacco about him. "This is strange," remarks the operator; "I never knew the wand make a mistake before. Now it tells me positively that you have tobacco somewhere about you, and according to the direction of the pressure it should be somewhere about your chest. Will you kindly open your breast pocket?" He thrusts the wand inside the coat, and brings it out again with the cigar on its end. "The wand was right, you see. I'm afraid you take a whiff on the sly; in your sleep perhaps. Anyhow, this cigar is evidently your property. Allow me to return it to you."

While the general attention is drawn to the unexpected appearance of the cigar on the end of the wand; the performer has ample opportunity to palm in his left hand the reserve cigar. Apparently transferring the cigar on the wand to that hand, he draws the visible cigar back into the tube, shows the loose one in its place, and hands this latter to the supposed owner.

The trick may then be repeated in the same way; save that this time the cigar produced on the end of the wand is itself given away, the left hand grasping it just as the piston is drawn back, and so drawing it off the needle-point.

If the exhibition takes place in public, it is extremely likely that one of the lady spectators may have a muff on her lap. In such case the performer may cause some amusement by coming to a halt in front of the

lady, and assuring her that the wand indicates (though he can scarcely believe it) that she has tobacco in some shape in her possession. He may then proceed to "find" a cigar in her muff, the open ends of which render the production exceptionally easy.

THE "SWALLOWING" WAND.

This wand derives its rather curious title from the fact that it is made, to all appearance, to pass, to the extent of two-thirds of its length, down the throat of some young gentleman selected from the audience.

The wand is in fact the one ordinarily held by the performer, made, say, of some hard wood, with ivory or ebony mounts, as *a* in Fig. 92. The secret lies in the

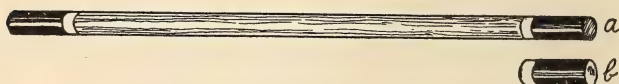


FIG. 92.

use in addition of a little metal tube, *b*, of such a size as to pass easily over the tube, and of the same length as one of the mounts, which it is japanned or enamelled to exactly represent.

To use the wand, this is secretly slipped over one end of it. The performer then inserts the opposite end into the mouth of his victim, covering any portion of the mount left visible by grasping it between the forefinger and thumb of the left hand. He then slides the false mount up and down with the opposite hand, as shown in Fig. 93, the effect to the eye of the spectator being that the whole wand is drawn in and out of the

victim's mouth. The free end of the wand is allowed to pass up the sleeve of the performer.



FIG. 93.

This is of course not presented as a trick in itself, but introduced as a piece of by-play, under pretence of measuring the boy's mouth, or under some similar pretext. It may be relied upon to create much fun among a juvenile audience.¹

¹ For an effective use of this wand in a somewhat different way, see the trick entitled "The Flight of Time," *post*.

CHAPTER V.

TRICKS WITH WATCHES.

THE first requirement, in the case of most watch tricks, is to obtain secret possession or control of the borrowed article; so as to be able, unknown to the spectators, to deal with it as may be necessary for the purpose of the trick. The use of the "watch-box" (with or without the "ticking" movement) is familiar to all conjurers, and another method, suitable for stage use, has been indicated at page 7. A third plan is to form, in view of the spectators, a conical paper bag, to have the watch¹ dropped therein, and after a little appropriate "talkee-talkee," to open out the paper and show that it has disappeared. The paper is then crumpled up, as having served its purpose, and the watch, which remains therein, is extracted at leisure for disposal as may be necessary.

The secret here lies in the fact that the sheet of paper is in reality double (see Fig. 94), consisting of two sheets of newspaper or plain printing paper, *a, b, c, d*, pasted together throughout, with the exception of a kite-shaped portion extending from corner to corner, as indicated by the letters *d, e, b, f, d* in the diagram. The loose corner of the upper sheet is cut off, so that the line *e, f* forms the mouth of a triangular pocket.

¹ This may, according to circumstances, either be the original or a substitute, for which the original has been changed.

In the act of twisting the sheet of paper into a bag the mouth of this pocket (which is kept on the inner side) is opened, and the watch is dropped therein. When the paper is again spread out, and held by the

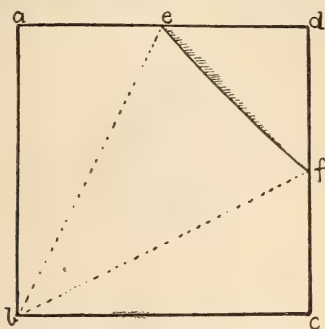


FIG. 94.

corners *a* and *d*, or *d* and *c*, the watch has disappeared, but does not fall, being in fact comfortably resting in the angle *b*.

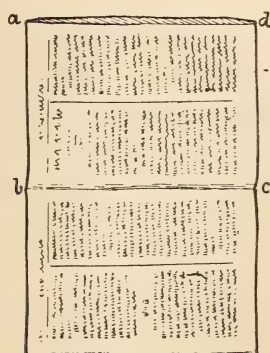


FIG. 95.

Another method of forming the bag is to take a four-page sheet of some periodical of convenient size, as shown in Fig. 95, and to prepare it by pasting a

duplicate (by the edges only) over the upper page. The portion pasted (half an inch wide) extends from *a* to *b*, *b* to *c*, and *c* to *d*; *a* to *d* being left open, and forming the mouth of a square pocket, nearly the size of the page. In use, the paper is twisted as shown in Fig. 96,



FIG. 96.

the inner edge of the pocket being laid over against the opposite side of the bag. As in the former case, any article dropped into the bag actually goes into the pocket, and, when the paper is again unrolled, and held by the corners *a*, *d*, or either of them, is found to have disappeared.

For the knowledge of another, and in some respects more artistic method of working this disappearance, I am indebted to Mr. C. O. Williams, already mentioned. The speciality of this method is that the sheet of paper, which is about fourteen inches square, is quite unprepared. It is twisted in the ordinary way into a cone,

but of comparatively small size, being at its largest diameter not more than three inches across. (See Fig. 97.) A watch is dropped into it, and the corner *a* turned down as in Fig. 98. In this condition it is



FIG. 97.



FIG. 98.

handed to a spectator to hold. After a little by-play the performer takes it from him, grasping it by the upper end, with the fingers in front and thumb behind. He holds it to the spectator's ear, asking if he hears the watch still ticking. In so doing, however, he lowers the bag to a horizontal position, the effect of which is that the watch runs to the larger end, where it is secured by light pressure with the fingers. The cone is then restored to its normal position, smaller end downwards. The bag may now be transferred from hand to hand, the watch being clipped by the thumb and fingers of each in turn. It may then be opened out, and shown empty, the watch remaining hidden at first behind the folded-down corner of the paper and afterwards palmed.

This method demands some amount of address on the part of the performer, but, smartly worked, produces a complete illusion, the general belief of the spectators being that the watch is up to the last moment at the bottom of the bag, and consequently out of reach of the hand which holds it. If a folded silk handkerchief be secretly dropped into the bag with the watch (the latter uppermost), the handkerchief will remain at the bottom during the subsequent manipulations, and when the bag is opened will be found to have taken the place of the timepiece,—a very effective little transformation.

Another method is to wrap the watch in a sheet of printed paper, laid flat on the table. The watch can be felt and heard to tick inside the package, and yet it can be instantly extracted by the performer. To

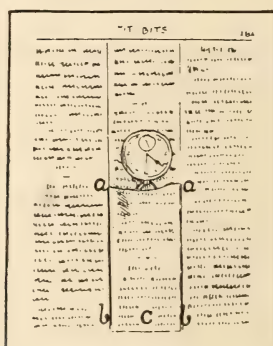


FIG. 99.

achieve this result, the paper is again “faked,” but in a different manner. The paper should be one having three columns of print, such as *Tit-Bits* or *Answers*, as illustrated in Fig. 99. A half-column cut from a similar

paper is gummed or pasted by its edges along the lines *a b*, *a b*; the ends *a a* and *b b* being left open. The intervening space forms a sort of tunnel across the surface of the paper. The sheet being spread upon the table, the performer, standing at the side marked *b b*, places the watch in the centre, and wraps it up by folding the paper over once or twice towards himself, first, however, slipping the bow of the watch within the opening *a a*. The effect of the folding, if properly managed, is that the watch slides along the paper tunnel towards the performer. When it has reached the position indicated by the letter *c*, he turns down the sides from left and right. The watch is now to all appearance securely wrapped in the middle of the paper, though in reality it is resting in an outward fold only, whence the performer can allow it to drop into his hand at pleasure.

It is obvious that the page may be prepared as above described while still forming part of the serial selected, and torn therefrom in the presence of the audience when required for use,—an additional guarantee, in appearance, that it is an ordinary sheet of paper.

The same effect may, with a little address, be obtained with a piece of unprepared paper. The paper should in this case be about six inches square, of stout substance, but not harsh or brittle. The performer, taking this in the left hand, lays the watch on its centre, and folds down, first the right, and then the left side over it, not too closely, but leaving a clear half inch of space on each side of the watch. In folding down the paper, he moulds it a little to the shape of the watch. Having turned down the sides, he next

folds down the upper end in like manner. Before making the final fold, he tilts the paper slightly towards him. The effect is that the watch runs down to the lower end of the paper, the little finger of the left hand, placed beneath, preventing it from coming too far, and the lower end of the paper is then folded back *with the watch in it*. The watch is therefore, as in the last case, resting in an outer fold, wherein it may be heard to tick, but whence it can be slipped out instantly when desired.

The following neat expedient is the invention of a German conjurer (Professor Ernst, of Hamburg). A piece of flash paper, five inches square, is prepared by making two cross cuts, X, an inch and a half long, in its centre. If this be done with a sharp knife, and with the paper laid out on a flat surface, the paper may be shown at a few feet distance, without the cuts being noticeable. Having thus exhibited it, in a casual way, the performer lays it on his left hand, and a borrowed watch (lady's size) upon it. He then gathers up the corners, and twists them together. He holds the packet, still on the hand, to the ear of some spectator, who is satisfied by the ticking that the watch is still there. On arriving at his table, he with the right hand picks up the packet by the screwed-up corners, and immediately flashes it off, over the candle, at the same time dropping the watch, which has passed through the opening and remained in the left hand, into his *profonde*, to be dealt with as the nature of the intended *dénouement* may require.

Among other useful appliances for secretly gaining possession of a borrowed watch is a small black alpaca

bag, of special construction. To make it, assuming that the bag is to be seven inches in depth, a strip of the material twenty-one inches long by, say, five inches in width, will be required. This is folded in three, lengthwise, as follows: The lower end, to the extent of seven inches, is folded back on the centre portion. The cloth is then turned over, and the upper end folded down in like manner. The outer edges on each side are sewn together; the raw edges at top and bottom are hemmed, and the folded edge of each stitched so as also to represent a hem. The result is a double bag (see Fig. 100), with one opening, *a b*, at top, and an-

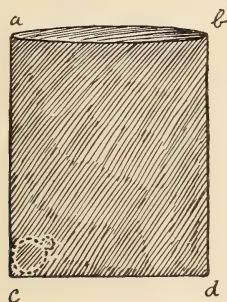


FIG. 100.

other, *c d*, at bottom, though to the eye of the spectators the bag appears a perfectly ordinary one.

To prepare it for use, the performer drops a dummy watch into the mouth *a b*, and lets it sink into the corner *c*. He then takes the bag by that corner, thereby holding the dummy in position, turns the bag over, and gets the lender of the borrowed watch to drop it into the mouth *c d*. He then moves away in order to place the watch in the custody of a second spectator, but during the transit transfers the bag from hand to

hand, and in so doing again turns it over, gripping the borrowed watch in place of the substitute, and releasing the latter. When he reaches the spectator to whom he proposes to confide the watch, he asks him to put his hand in the bag and take it out himself. It is, of course, the dummy which is taken out, the genuine article remaining in the bag, and being carried off by the performer or his assistant, to be dealt with as required.

If the circle of spectators is so small that there is a fear of the substitute watch being caught sight of by persons who have seen the original, and who might notice a difference between them, each may be wrapped in a piece of soft paper before placing it in the bag.

There is another method of using the same kind of bag, in which this preliminary wrapping up is essential. In this case, the performer, after receiving the borrowed watch in the bag, simply lets loose the dummy. It falls with a crash on the floor, and the performer discovers, to his pretended horror, that there is a hole in the bag; hence the supposed accident, which he repairs after some pre-arranged fashion. For this mode of working it is better to have the mouth of the bag, from *a* to *b*, stitched half-way across, leaving only just room for the passage of the dummy watch, which in this form of the bag can lie snugly in the opposite corner, till, by tilting the bag accordingly, it slides down to the opening, and falls through it.

“ EXCHANGING ” A WATCH.

It is a frequent occurrence in watch tricks, that the watch wrapped up, or otherwise dealt with even at the earlier stage of the trick, is not the original, but a

substitute. As a necessary preliminary, the former must be exchanged for the latter. There are many ways of effecting this. One of the simplest is as follows: The performer has the substitute at the outset in a pochette on the left side. At the same moment when, with the right hand, he receives the borrowed watch from the owner, he drops the left hand to the side, and palms the substitute. He then asks some one to be good enough to hold the watch for a moment. In transit he makes the motion of transferring it to the left hand, really palming it in the right, and with the left hand handing over the substitute.

Another daring but generally effective plan is to have the substitute watch in one of the outside coat-tail pockets. On receiving the borrowed watch, the performer makes believe to transfer it from the right hand to the left (really palming it). He then orders it to pass up the sleeve, shows his left hand empty, and reproduces it with the right from under the left arm or from inside the vest. Again he makes believe to place it in the left hand, and this time orders it to pass into the tail-pocket. Plunging the right hand into the pocket, he leaves the borrowed watch therein, and produces in its place the duplicate.

The first pass should be made while standing close to the owner of the watch, that he may tacitly identify it, on production from under the arm or from the vest, as his own. In (apparently) producing it for the second time, the performer will do well to stand a little farther off, that the proprietor may not be in a position to detect the substitution.

Where in the course of a trick the performer desires openly to "vanish" a watch (either the original or the

dummy which, to the spectators, has temporarily represented it), this may be neatly and effectively done by means of a "pull" of silk elastic, one end being attached to the performer's vest, midway between the shoulders, and the other to a short piece of fine gut.¹ At the opposite end of this is a little wire clip with its points bent inwards and crossing each other, as shown in Fig. 101. Just above the wire, secured by a knot



FIG. 101.

above and below it, is a leaden bullet, *a*, with a hole through it. The length of the pull is so adjusted that the clip shall lie normally midway up the forearm, or a little lower down. When the arm is shortened by resting the hand upon the hip, the appliance naturally falls lower, and is brought within reach of the hand, the bullet, which gives a better hold than the wire hook, being nipped between the finger and thumb. By passing the bow of the watch between the bent points of *b*; it is instantly and firmly secured. The watch is then professedly rubbed away to nothing between the hands, a sudden straightening of the arms, with simultaneous relaxation of the pressure of the hands, causing it to fly up the sleeve.

It is hardly necessary to remark that the performer should take the earliest available opportunity to retire and release the watch from its captivity, as its unexpected reappearance, dangling from the sleeve, would be distinctly objectionable.

¹ Where, as in the present case, it is desirable that an elastic pull should give freely, and yet exercise a quick and lively tension, this object is better attained by the use of several strands of fine rubber, knotted together at the ends, than by a single rubber cord.

THE AMERICAN VANISHER.

Another appliance for the same purpose is known as the "American" vanisher. (See Fig. 102.) This is a flat metal ring one and one half inches in diameter, and not unlike a key-ring, which indeed it resembles a

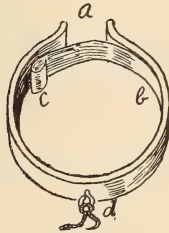


FIG. 102.

good deal in principle. At one part of its circumference it has a three-quarter inch opening, *a*, the ends on either side being slightly curled back. Across this opening lies a piece of clock-spring, rivetted at one end, *b*. The other end, *c*, is free, but presses firmly against the inner circumference of the ring. If the bow of a watch be inserted in the opening, and pressed against the spring, the end *c* gives way just sufficiently to allow the passage of the bow. The moment it has passed *c*, it is securely threaded on to the ring. On the side of the ring opposite to the opening is an eyelet, *d*. To this is attached a piece of cord elastic, the two ends of which are then threaded through a ring (preferably of ivory), sewn to the performer's vest on the left side, near the waist, and thence carried to the opposite side of the body, knotted together, and slipped over one of the front brace-buttons. Getting the ring secretly into

his left hand and keeping the elastic cord well under cover of his arm, it is an easy matter for the performer to slip the bow of the borrowed watch within the ring. Once secured, it is made, by an extension of the arms, to vanish under the coat, where it remains until the performer has an opportunity to leave the stage and remove it from the ring.

In connection with this subject of getting possession of a borrowed watch, I may here mention

A NEW "PALM" FOR WATCHES.

This is in effect the application of the familiar "thumb" or "Frikell" palm to the case of a watch. The credit of the idea belongs, I believe, to "Selbit," in whose *Magician's Handbook* I first made its acquaintance.

Selbit instructs the performer to take the watch (preferably one of the keyless kind, the winder affording a better grip) between the thumb and middle finger; then, under cover of taking the watch in the left hand, to remove the thumb, and with the middle finger push the watch until the bow and winder are received in the root of the thumb, which closes upon them and holds them fast, the fingers being spread apart as if the hand were empty. The left hand is to be closed, as if containing the watch, and carried upwards.

In one or two points I venture to think (if I may venture on a friendly criticism) that these instructions may be improved upon. In the first place, I would suggest as preferable that the watch be allowed at the outset to lie flat on the second and third fingers, not

quite upright, but with the bow pointing somewhat to the left (in a northwest direction, so to speak). See Fig. 103.

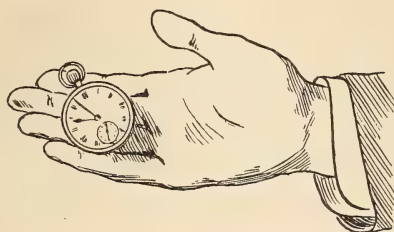


FIG. 103.

Under the foregoing conditions, the momentary closing of the fingers, as the right hand moves towards the left, turns the watch over, and throws the bow just into the fork of the thumb, in the very position most favourable for getting an immediate and secure grip upon it.

Secondly, the direction to hold the fingers *spread apart* after palming the watch seems to me ill-advised. Many performers appear to think that extending the hand like a starfish when hiding something concealed in it constitutes an ideal "palm," but this is a great mistake. The object of the conjurer in all his acts and movements should be to imitate nature as closely as possible. Now in nature no one ever by any chance holds the hand in this manner. The hand in such an abnormal attitude "doth protest too much," and, by its over-assertion of being empty, suggests to the acute observer that something is concealed therein. In the present case, with the thumb necessarily held close to the hand, the outspread position of the fingers becomes even more violently suggestive. The most natural

position of the hand in such a case is with the second, third, and fourth fingers slightly bent, and the forefinger alone extended, indicating the opposite hand.

But to return to the main branch of our subject. When a conjurer has once succeeded in getting a watch out of the possession of its rightful owner, it is usually his custom to apparently maltreat it in some way or other, and it may be convenient here to refer to a couple of little pieces of apparatus designed to produce this effect.

THE NOISY WATCH-WINDER.

This consists of a little flat metal case, *a a* (see Fig. 104), about two inches in length by one in breadth, and three eighths of an inch in depth. The one end is closed. Projecting from the opposite end is a little cog-wheel, *b*, taking up its whole breadth. Within the case is a steel spring, *c*, whose free end is engaged in the cogs of the wheel.

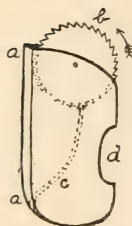


FIG. 104.

When the wheel is moved in the direction shown by the arrow in the diagram, a sharp metallic sound, like the winding of a bottle-jack, or of a large clock, is produced.

To use the winder, it is held in the right hand, across the second and third joints of the fingers, with the wheel end pointing to the forefinger. A borrowed watch is taken in the opposite hand, and a pretence made of winding it (after the usual stem-winding fashion). The performer at the same time runs the ball of the right thumb over the cog-wheel, causing it to revolve, and thereby producing a sound horrifying to the

owner of the watch, who naturally fancies that some deadly damage is being done to his or her cherished timekeeper. The noise may be made greater or less according as the soundhole *d* is left open, or covered by the lower part of the thumb.

A little additional effect may be produced by the performer placing the watch to his ear, and exclaiming "Dear me! it has stopped!" This seems such a natural consequence of the supposed ill-usage that everybody is quite ready to believe it, and the relief of the owner is the greater when the timepiece is ultimately returned safe and sound.

AN IMPROVED "REPEATER."

The old "repeater," the apparatus whereby a borrowed watch was made apparently to strike the hours or answer questions, has been fully described in one of my earlier works,¹ and is doubtless familiar to the reader. There is, however, a more modern form of repeater, designed by Hartz, which, though in principle the same thing, has a little improvement in detail which makes it much more certain and more manageable in working.

Instead of the mechanism being set in motion, as in the older pattern, by direct pressure of the performer's body against the button *a* (Fig. 105), it is in this case actuated by a cord which passes over the button, and the tightening of which causes the necessary depression. The improved apparatus, which takes the form shown in Fig. 106, is secured by a strap *b* to the forearm of the performer, a little above the wrist. One end of the

¹ See "The Mesmerized Watch," *Modern Magic*, p. 222.

cord *c* is attached to the eyelet *d*. The opposite end, after passing over the stud *a*, is drawn up the sleeve, and inside the vest, where it is attached to one of the

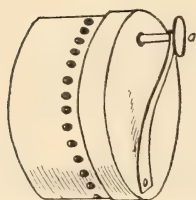


FIG. 105.

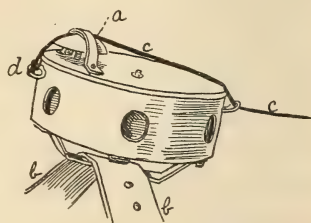


FIG. 106.

hinder brace-buttons. The effect of this arrangement is that when the arm is extended the cord is drawn taut; the stud is pressed, and the repeater begins to strike, ceasing as soon as the pull is relaxed.

An example of a very effective use of this little apparatus will be found described in connection with Hartz's version of the "Locked and Corded Box" trick, p. 176.

Having now discussed at length various methods of getting possession of a borrowed watch, and of harrowing up the feelings of the owner by submitting it to imaginary injury, I proceed to describe a few effective ways of relieving his mind by its reproduction.

TO REPRODUCE A BORROWED WATCH IN ANY ONE SELECTED OF A NUMBER OF BOXES.

The performer having, by one or other of the artifices already described, obtained possession of a borrowed watch, pretends that it is lost, and sets to work

to find it. After a little consideration, he says: "You need not be anxious, sir. I fancy I know where it is. I expect it has found its way into my jewel-case. Ah, there is the case, on that table."

The so-called jewel-case proves to be of a very unpretentious character, being, in fact, a common cigar-box; which, being opened, is seen to contain about a dozen equally common cardboard pill-boxes. Putting these out on the table, the performer proceeds to open them, one by one. They may either be empty, or, if preferred, may contain sundry articles of Mohawk Minstrel jewelry; diamonds as big as florins, and so on, each introduced with appropriate patter as the gift of some crowned (or half-crowned) head to the performer. All the boxes are opened in turn, but the watch is not to be found, and the performer finally declares that he must try another method. By his magic power he will compel the watch to travel into one or other of the boxes. At the pleasure of the audience, he puts aside box after box, till only one is left, and in that one is found the missing article.

To begin with, the so-called jewel-case is a box of the kind described at page 29, having a hollow space beneath it. In the course of his patter the performer manages to place the watch in an extra pill-box, and when he takes up the faked cigar-box, he slips this underneath it, keeping it in position with the forefinger till the cigar-box is again fairly down on the table. As each pill-box is returned, after being examined, he lays it down again close by the cigar-box. When he has gone through them, he says: "Well, this is very peculiar; but the watch has got to be found somehow or other. I must try another plan." So

saying he lifts and puts aside the cigar-box, as if merely to get it out of the way; thereby leaving the extra pill-box close in rear of the others. There is not the smallest fear of the spectators detecting the addition.

He then makes use of the familiar equivoque. Dividing the boxes into two equal, or about equal, parcels, he lays his wand between them. "Which half shall I take, ladies and gentlemen? Left or right?" Whatever the reply, he pushes aside the half that does *not* comprise the watch, with the remark, "That disposes of that lot," or something to the same effect. He now arranges the remainder in two rows, parallel to the company. "Which of these, ladies and gentlemen? Back row or front row?" And, whatever the reply, he again discards the row which does not suit his purpose. "Once more, ladies and gentlemen, this lot or that lot?" And so, until only one box is left, being the one which contains the watch.

It will be found that ten boxes is a good number to start with, the additional box making eleven. In making the first division, which will naturally be into five and six, the box containing the watch should be one of the five; and at the next step the division should be three and two, the right box being one of the two. This ensures having the right box reached in three trials, which would not be the case if, at either stage, it formed one of the larger parcels.

A LOST WATCH FOUND IN THE PERFORMER'S PURSE.

The purse used for this trick should be one of the "bag" shape, and of a kind which, when closed, fastens itself by simple pressure. This should be placed, open,

and mouth uppermost, in the left trouser-pocket of the performer. To prevent its closing prematurely, its jaws may be kept apart by means of a little piece of cork, in each end of which a notch has been cut, and which acts as a gag. In addition to this, the operator must provide himself with a dummy watch, lady's size. This is intended to be sacrificed, and may therefore be as common as he pleases.

The performer begins by borrowing a lady's watch, which he forthwith exchanges for the substitute, keeping the genuine one in the left hand. Asking some gentleman to take charge of the watch (really the dummy), he hands it to him accordingly. In so doing he turns his right side to the company (having chosen his assistant so as to necessitate this), and takes the opportunity to slip the left hand into the trouser-pocket, and the borrowed watch into the open purse, which he should not now wait to close, as he will have ample opportunity to do so later. The gentleman receiving the substitute watch is asked to close his hand tightly upon it.

The performer now fetches from his table a small alpaca bag about six inches by four, and asks the holder of the watch to drop it in. The only speciality of the bag is that one of its lower corners is unstitched for a space of about two inches. Naturally, when the dummy watch is placed in it, it finds its way to the open corner, and falls through it on to the floor. The performer professes himself grieved at the accident, and endeavours to repair the damage by rubbing the watch between his hands, but to his still greater distress it disappears altogether. (This may be effected either by sleight-of-hand, or by means of a pull, as the performer

pleases.) After keeping up the pretence of embarrassment for a little while, he decides that the watch is fairly lost, and that his only plan will be to pay a money compensation to the owner. Having ascertained what value she puts upon it, he takes his purse out of his pocket in order to pay the amount, but, to his pretended astonishment, no sooner opens it than he finds therein the missing timekeeper.

When the hand is put in the pocket, the performer pushes aside the little gag, and closes the purse, before producing it.

This trick is sometimes performed with a purse whose bottom seam has been ripped open (as in the case of the "wand" trick described at page 103) and the watch introduced through the opening thus made. Nothing, however, is gained by this arrangement, which is indeed a needless complication, and has the further disadvantage of preventing the purse being offered for examination.

ANOTHER METHOD.

A very neat little trick, terminating in the same way, is one of the specialities of the well-known wizard, Imro Fox. Having wrapped a borrowed watch in a handkerchief, which he holds to the ear of a spectator to prove that the watch is still there, he bangs it violently upon the table. The owner feels more and more anxiety as to his property, and is not much better pleased when the performer, shaking out the handkerchief, shows that the watch has departed altogether. The trick comes to an end, as in the former case, with the offer of a money payment by way of compens-

ation, and the unexpected finding of the watch in the purse.

As the acute reader will no doubt have suspected, the watch is no longer in the handkerchief when it is banged upon the table, the actual blow being given by the ball of the wrist. The cleverness of the trick lies in the manner in which the watch is extracted from it. To effect this, the performer lays the handkerchief squarely on the table, with the watch a shade to the right of its centre. He then folds it straight down the middle, the portion on the left side being laid over that on the right. One third of the farthestmost portion is



FIG. 107.

then brought forward over the centre, and the forward portion turned back over that again. The shape of the folded handkerchief is now an oblong, as in Fig. 107, closed on all sides except *b*, which is open. The position of the watch is as indicated at 1 in the diagram. If at this stage the performer were to turn back *b* on *a*, the watch would be fairly wrapped up, and this is what he apparently does. He picks up the handkerchief, the end *a* in the left hand, *b* in the right, and folds *b* on *a*; but a moment before he does so, he lowers the right hand a little, and lets the watch slip down to position 2. The effect is that, when the final turnover is made, the watch lies in an open pocket, the opening being toward

the left hand, into which the watch is then allowed to slide.¹

The right hand takes the now empty handkerchief, and holds it to the ear of a spectator, who hears the tick, not of the watch just seen, but of another, strapped to the arm of the performer, just above the wrist. The banging of the supposed watch on the table then follows. While attention is thus called to the right hand, the left hand steals to the trouser-pocket, and inserts the watch in the purse, to be produced in due time as already described.

A BORROWED WATCH CHANGED TO A LEMON.

A valuable accessory for use in a watch trick is the ticking lemon, a speciality of Messrs. Hamley Brothers. This is an excellently modelled imitation lemon, of *papier mâché*, with a circular hole, one and a half inches in diameter, in one side of it. Half of the internal space is occupied by a watch movement, which being wound up produces a ticking sound. The remainder of the cavity (that part next the opening) is left unoccupied.

A lady's watch and handkerchief having been borrowed, the performer proceeds, ostensibly, to wrap the watch in the handkerchief, but in reality substitutes the lemon. Handing the ball thus formed to the owner of the watch, he asks her if she can hear it ticking in the handkerchief. She naturally replies that she does. He then disposes of the actual watch for subsequent reproduction in some effective way. (A good

¹ The reader will observe that the wrapping-up of the watch in the handkerchief is in effect the same as the folding in paper, described at page 139.

plan, though old-fashioned, is to work it into a loaf, which is then loaded into a hat, and given to some one to hold over his head.)¹

This done, the performer asks the lady whether she still hears the watch ticking. On receiving her reply, he bares his arms, takes back the handkerchief, and, commanding the watch to pass wherever he intends it ultimately to be found, opens the handkerchief and rubs it between his hands, really into the lemon, which he then exhibits in place of the watch, the handkerchief having vanished altogether.

While the general attention is called to the reproduction of the watch, which immediately follows, he has ample opportunity to exchange the mechanical lemon for an unprepared one of similar appearance.

A BORROWED WATCH REPRODUCED FROM A GLASS OF MILK.

This particular *dénouement* to a watch trick is one devised by myself many years ago, and one which I can recommend as both easy and effective.

A watch is borrowed and passed off, by one or other of the methods already described. Presently the assistant brings in on a tray two tumblers, one empty, the other full of milk. To prove no "deception," the performer pours the milk from the one glass to the other. Then, dipping two fingers in the milk, he produces thence the missing watch, which he wipes, and returns to the owner, who usually examines it with a disgusted air, and a mental vow that he will never trust his cherished timepiece to a conjurer again.

¹ *More Magic*, p. 193.

As a matter of fact, he has no reason for any uneasiness, for the watch never goes into the milk at all. The secret lies in the use of a little hook of special design, as depicted in Figure 108. It consists of a slip of zinc, one and one quarter inch in length and three eighths of an inch wide, bent into the shape shown in the diagram. The upper and under sides of the longer arm, *a*, are covered with glass-paper



FIG. 108.

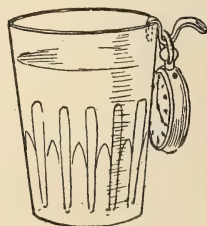


FIG. 109.

or soft rubber, to enable it to be gripped more firmly between the fingers. The depression *c* serves to receive the bow of the watch, and *b* to hook it on to the edge of the glass, as shown in Fig. 109. The watch is brought in, thus suspended, behind the tumbler of milk, and the tray bearing this and the empty tumbler is placed on a table, preferably in the centre of the stage. The performer stands beside the table, facing the audience, in such a position that the tray and glasses are on his right hand. Picking up the empty glass with his left hand, and the full one with the right, at the same time slipping the arm *a* of the "hook" between the first and second fingers, he faces half round to the left, so as to turn the back of the right hand towards the spectators, and pours the milk from the

one glass to the other. He places the now empty glass on a table or chair on his left (thereby still keeping the back of the hand to the audience), and then with the right hand grasps the newly filled one and hooks the watch, which has remained in his hand, on to the edge of this. He has then only to make a half-turn to the right, thereby bringing the glass to the front, and the hand behind, and in that position to place the glass on the table. After a due amount of "talkee-talkee," he dips two fingers in the milk, and in withdrawing them lifts up the watch from behind. Of course it is not even moistened, save by the touch of the wet fingers, but a careful wiping adds to the effect of the trick, and at the same time creates an opportunity for the removal of the hook.¹

The arrangement of the earlier part of the trick, leading up to the use of the glass of milk, is of course quite optional. In my own working, before a juvenile

¹ The late M. Hermann, of Berlin, to whom I communicated the above trick, suggested that an effective card-trick might be worked on similar lines. I never put it to a practical test, but mention it in case others may be inclined to do so. His idea was a glass, filled with ink, behind which is suspended a given card, say the king of hearts. Two cards are drawn from the pack; the one (forced) being a duplicate king of hearts; the other, say the eight of diamonds, chosen freely.

The king of hearts is taken back, shuffled with the pack (really brought to the top, palmed off, and got rid of). The eight of diamonds is then taken back from the holder, and plunged into the glass of ink. When drawn out again, it is dry, and has changed to the king of hearts, *i. e.*, the king of hearts has been drawn up from behind, while the eight of diamonds remains in the ink.

The idea presupposes the use of the small cards used on the continent of Europe. The hook, instead of being turned up at its outer end, would in this case terminate in a clip for the reception of the card.

audience, the introductory portion took the form of an amended version of the old "mortar" trick. The pestle and mortar were of the improved kind described in *More Magic* (p. 188), in which the fragments of a smashed watch are beforehand placed in a circular hollow at the bottom of the mortar, and the borrowed watch is picked up by the pestle, the head of which has a padded cavity for its reception. The general course of the trick is in this case somewhat like the following.

A small-sized watch having been borrowed, is discovered by the critical eye of the performer to be out of order, and he volunteers to put it to rights. The first step is, naturally, to take it apart. This he accomplishes by placing it in the mortar, and apparently smashing it to pieces. Under pretence that it is "a very hard watch," he asks his assistant to fetch him the kitchen poker, and when brought hammers the fragments with the knob of this. The pestle, as no longer needed, is carried off by the assistant, who extracts the watch, and hitches it on to the edge of the glass of milk. Meanwhile, the performer picks out of the mortar a few of the fragments, pours them back again, and continues the smashing process. Bang! Bang! Bang! (Here, by the way, a considerable additional effect may be obtained by dropping into the mortar half a dozen of the little paper *amorces* sold as caps for toy pistols. Every time the knob of the poker comes down on one of these there will be a loud but quite harmless explosion.)

With a genial smile, the operator remarks: "I've done it now, I think, and pretty quickly, I flatter myself. A regular watchmaker would have taken

half an hour over that little job." (Here the assistant brings in the two glasses, as above.) "Now for the restoration process. When a watch has been keeping bad hours, or is otherwise out of sorts, nothing does it so much good as a drop of milk. You may remember that the March Hare dipped *his* watch into his tea, but it did it no good. I believe he also tried butter, but found that butter didn't suit the works. If he had used milk instead, his watch might have been going now. You don't believe me? Excuse me, I never say anything I can't prove, and to prove this I will restore this lady's watch by the milk process. I must make sure that I have all the pieces." He picks the fragments out of the mortar and drops them into the empty glass. He then transfers the milk, and with it the watch, to this latter glass as already described, gives the milk a stir with his wand, and ultimately produces the watch, restored, apparently from the milk. The fragments remain at the bottom, and with the glass are presently removed by the assistant.¹

In cases where the spectators are so placed that they might possibly get a side view of the watch hanging behind the glass, this difficulty is met by bringing in three glasses on the tray; an empty one on each side, and the one filled with milk (behind which the watch is concealed) in the middle.

¹ At one period I made a practice of appending a Shaksperian quotation in my programmes to each trick, and if the performer happens to be a student of Shakspeare he will find it a very interesting task to select mottoes for this purpose. Some of the quotations that suggest themselves are curiously apposite. In the present instance the motto was from *Much Ado about Nothing*—"Call the rest of the watch together." For a handkerchief trick a capital motto may be found in *Othello*—"There's magic in the web of it."

A WATCH FIRED FROM A PISTOL, AND ATTACHING ITSELF
TO A BORROWED HAT.

This is another effective way of reproducing a smashed watch. A watch is borrowed, and maltreated after the usual fashion of conjurers (the real watch being meanwhile dropped into a pochette). The fragments of the substitute are placed in a pistol. This done, the performer bethinks himself that he lacks a target to fire at, and it strikes him that a tall hat would be a good thing for the purpose. He borrows one accordingly. He hesitates for a moment where to deposit it, but finally decides to place it over a wide-mouthed carafe which happens to be standing on the table, and which is of such a height that the hat rests suspended on it, with its brim just clear of the table. Getting as far away as possible, he fires at the hat, when the watch is seen, apparently, to affix itself to it.

The working of the trick is very simple, though it demands a certain amount of address. On returning to the stage after borrowing the hat, the performer takes the opportunity to insert into one of its sides, about half-way up, a sharp-pointed black pin, bent into the form of an S hook. In arranging the hat upon the water-carafe, he brings up the watch behind it, and hangs it on this hook. The carafe is placed upon a movable disc, either in the surface of the table or forming a sort of pedestal, as described at pp. 44, 45. When the pistol is fired, the carafe and the hat with it make a semi-revolution, and the watch is brought to the front. If, as is not unlikely, the hat is seen to "wobble" a little, this is merely regarded as a natural result of the force of the explosion.

A NOVEL WATCH TRICK.

The description of this capital trick I quote from *The Magician's Handbook*, by "Selbit." The author states that it is based on a suggestion from Mr. Howard Thurston. It has been said, with some truth, that it takes two conjurers to invent a really first-class trick, and the present, it would appear, is an example of such "honours divided." Selbit describes the trick as follows:

"After some gentleman has obliged with the loan of his gold chronometer, the performer carefully wraps it in a piece of tissue paper, and places the package in his outside breast pocket, leaving half the paper showing. This is never again approached by the hand till the conclusion of the trick. The conjurer next borrows a gentleman's hat, which he gives to any voluntary assistant to hold above his head as high as possible, while he (the performer) stands some distance away and commands the watch to pass from the paper packet into the borrowed hat. The assistant then looks into the *chapeau*, and discovers to his great astonishment that the performer's command has been obeyed. Both the borrowed articles are then handed back, and the paper package is undone and shown to be quite empty.

"The main part of the secret consists in having a special tube attached to the interior of the outside pocket, which extends from the left breast of the coat to the right-hand coat-tail, passing round the performer's back.¹ When the watch is taken, it is carefully wrapped in a piece of tissue paper, which tears by means of finger pressure as it is placed in the pocket.

¹ Compare p. 3.

Consequently, by the time the borrowed hat is taken off the table, and attention called to the fact that it would be an impossibility for the watch to leave the paper package without the audience seeing it go, the chronometer has slid down the tube, and out of the end in the right coat-tail, into the hat rested there to receive it in such a manner as to effectively hide the watch as it passes into the *chapeau*. Now an assistant is told to hold the hat above his head, and he is also requested to listen to the borrowed watch ticking in performer's breast pocket. He acknowledges that it is there, because he can both see and feel it, though really he is listening to the conjurer's own watch, which has been previously placed in the top vest pocket, which will be found to match exactly the position that the borrowed watch would occupy in the outside pocket if it were really there. After the apparent impossibilities have all been set forth, and the effect worked up as brilliantly as possible, the climax is brought about as described above. Of course, if it is desired to work the experiment in a dress suit, the tube can be arranged to run from the inside breast pocket just as easily as from the outside pocket in a morning coat."

There is only one observation which I think it desirable to make on the above description. If I read Selbit's explanation rightly, the cloth tube is to be open at the lower end, and to discharge the watch directly into the hat. Such an arrangement (if this be the meaning) would be objectionable for several reasons. First, it would necessitate holding the hat in an unnatural and suggestive position; secondly, the hat must be at the right spot exactly at the right moment, or there would be a catastrophe; and lastly,

supposing those two difficulties surmounted, the watch would fall into the hat with an audible and objectionable "thud." The better arrangement would be to make the tube discharge itself into the *profonde* on the right side, and by arranging the patter accordingly, to give the watch full time to get home before the hat is actually taken in hand. If this is received in the left hand, with a slight forward movement of the body, there will be ample opportunity for the right hand to drop to the side and palm the watch, which can then be loaded into the hat without difficulty.

WATCH IT!

This capital trick is, I believe, of "Selbit's" own invention. I give in effect his own instructions for working it,¹ recommending the reader to improve upon them if he can see his way to do so, the trick being one that from its nature is susceptible of any amount of variation.

The performer must provide himself, to begin with, with four watches, of the cheap nickelled kind, exactly alike in appearance.² To the bezel of one of them, just above the XII., is brazed a needle point about a quarter of an inch long, pointing downwards. This forms a little hook, by means of which the watch is hooked into the performer's coat, behind his back, but within reach of his hand. The other three watches, which have no preparation, are disposed as follows: Two of them are placed in the vest pocket, one attached to the swivel

¹ *The Magician's Handbook*, p. 58.

² Match-boxes made in imitation of such watches may now be purchased for a few pence, and are quite good enough for the purpose of the trick.

of the watch chain, the other loose; and the third is placed, bow downwards, under the front of the vest. For facility of reference we will call the watch attached to the chain No. 1; the one under the vest, No. 2; the one on the back, No. 3; and the one loose in the pocket, No. 4.

Prepared as above, the performer comes forward to the audience, and takes out watch No. 1, as if to see the time. The sight of the watch suggests that he might do a little conjuring with it. He accordingly takes it off the chain and tucks the end of the latter under the front of the vest, in so doing hooking the swivel into the bow of No. 2. Apparently transferring No. 1 to the left hand (really palming it in the right), he carries the left hand, with the (supposed) watch, to the mouth, and makes believe to swallow it. After some small amount of facial distortion, as if he found a difficulty in getting it down, he draws in the pit of the stomach, when No. 2, thereby released, drops to the full extent of the chain. This is caught hold of by the left hand, the right hand meanwhile dropping No. 1 into a pochette or the *profonde*.

No. 2 is then unhooked from the chain, and taken in the right hand, while the empty swivel is put back, with the left hand, into the vest pocket, and in so doing is hooked into the bow of No. 4. No. 2 is next apparently transferred by any of the familiar passes from the one hand to the other, and the hand in which it is ostensibly left is rubbed lightly against the pit of the stomach. The performer exhibits this hand empty, and then turning round, shows that the watch has passed through his body, and is hanging on his back. This is of course really No. 3, which has been

there from the outset. While he thus turns away from the company he has ample opportunity to get rid of No. 2.

With some little pretence of difficulty, he gets No. 3 from off his back, and holds it in his right hand, with the face toward the spectators. Turning his right side away a little, he counts "One, two, three!" dropping the hand each time, and making believe at the word "three" to throw the watch in the air. The hand rises empty, having at the third downward movement left the watch hooked against the clothing.

After showing the hands empty, and casually remarking that "It is all right—the watch knows its way home," the performer places the left hand on the watch-chain, and slowly draws out No. 4, the surprise occasioned by its unexpected appearance giving him ample opportunity to again palm No. 3, and transfer it to safer quarters.

The hooking of the swivel into the bow of the watch, using the fingers of one hand only, will require some practice, but the trick is so exceptionally good that the needful labour will be well-bestowed.

WATCH IT! (*Another Method*).

This is another version of the same trick, arranged by the versatile gentleman known as "The Conjuring Comedian," Mr. G. W. Hunter.

Three watches only are in this case used. One has no speciality. Of the other two, each has a sharp-pointed hook, as already described, soldered to it, but in this case to its hinder side, a little below the bow. Of these two watches, one, which we will call A, is

attached to the watch-chain in the usual way, and is placed in the performer's left vest-pocket; and the other, which we will call *B*, is attached by means of the little hook to the back of his coat, about the level of the waist. For the disposal of the unprepared watch, *C*, a somewhat more elaborate arrangement is made. A piece of black thread, eight or nine inches long,¹ is attached to the swivel of the watch-chain already referred to, passed through the bow of the watch, and then fastened to the lowermost button of the performer's vest. This watch is then "vested" in the ordinary way.

Thus furnished, the performer is ready to commence operations, the course of the trick being as follows:

1. He takes watch *A* out of vest pocket, detaches it from swivel, transfers it (apparently) from the right hand to the left, opens this hand with a pat on the top of his head, and reproduces the watch from his nose, the left hand receiving it as it falls.

2. Taking the watch apparently in the right hand by the tourniquet, he "passes" it through the knees, from left side, reproducing it on right side.

3. Taking the watch in the right hand and making a pretended upward throw with it, he palms this watch (*A*) and, facing smartly round, shows *B* on his back. While removing this latter with the left hand, he hooks *A* under the lapel of the coat on the right side.

4. Standing with the left side turned to the spectators, and taking *B* in his right hand, he again makes a pretended upward throw with that hand, but in

¹ The exact length most suitable must be ascertained by experiment. It must be such as to allow the watch to drop to the full extent of the chain, but not farther.

lowering the hand for the throw leaves the watch hooked on to right coat-tail. Bringing up the right hand empty, he with the same hand lifts the lapel, exhibiting watch *A*, which he removes with the left hand.

5. Still keeping the left side turned to the audience, he makes an upward "throw" with the left hand, palming *A* therein, and almost at the same moment makes a right-about-face, exhibiting *B* on the right coat-tail. While attention is drawn to this, he hooks *A* on to the left coat-tail.

6. He is now standing with the right side to audience. Taking *B* (the watch last shown) in the right hand, he makes believe to place this in the left hand, really palming it in the right. Blowing on the left hand, he shows it empty, then stoops and places the right hand behind his right trouser-leg, below the knee, as if to bring up the watch from thence. As a matter of fact, however, he leaves the watch hooked behind the trouser, and brings up the hand empty, but so turned that the spectators cannot see that it is so, until after he has gone through the movement of placing the supposed watch in the left hand, which has, meanwhile, secured watch *A* from the left coat-tail. To the eye of the spectator, it appears that he has simply brought up the watch from behind the right leg and placed it in his left hand.

7. Showing the watch, first in the left hand, then in the right, he places it apparently in the left hand, really palming it in the right; he then makes an upward throw with the left hand, at the same time opening this hand, and with the right hand producing the watch from under the left elbow.

8. Standing with his left side to the audience, with

A in his left hand, he makes an upward throw with the same hand, palming it, and immediately turning round shows *B* behind the right trouser-leg. Again slightly turning away, he carries down the right hand to the spot, as if to bring up the watch, but in reality leaves it where it is, bringing up the hand, closed but empty, and again transfers the supposed watch to the left hand, showing in reality the one already there.

9. Again turning his left side to the spectators, he makes an upward throw with the left hand, palming *A* therein, and, facing round, shows *B* on trouser-leg. This he removes with the right hand, and in again turning round so as to face the audience, hooks *A* on his back with the left hand.

10. Carelessly passing *B* from hand to hand, and finally leaving it in the left, he makes believe to take it into the right hand by means of the tourniquet. He then opens this hand, at the same time giving himself a sudden slap on the chest, and turning round shows *A* on his back, the watch having apparently passed through his body.

While removing *A* with the right hand, the left hooks *B* to the under side of the coat lapel on that side.

11. Pretending to transfer *A* from right hand to left, he palms it, and makes the movement of rubbing it with the left hand through the lapel, which he then lifts, and shows that it (in reality *B*) has "passed" accordingly. *A* (which is now done with) is meanwhile dropped into right *profonde*.

12. Standing with his left side towards the audience and *B* in his right hand, he makes an upward throw, but as the hand sinks for the throw, leaves the watch hooked to the back of the right coat-tail. He

follows with his eyes the supposed upward flight of the watch, and in due course its supposed descent, the fore-finger of the right hand likewise following its imaginary course till, finally, it indicates the end of the chain, which is now allowed to hang loose over the front of the vest. At the same moment the stomach is retracted, when *C* drops down the thread, apparently attaching itself to the end of the chain.

13. He places *C* in the vest pocket, and while bowing his acknowledgments, secures *B* from the coat tail, and palms it, to be got rid of at the first convenient opportunity.

It is obvious that the performer is by no means restricted to the above series of passes, happily conceived as they undoubtedly are. The ingenious idea of the watch made to appear by running down a thread, in particular, might very well be adapted to other modes of production. The watch might be made, for instance, to appear in the centre of a handkerchief or flag, running down from one of two corners held in the hands. Or again, after one watch had been hooked on the centre of the back, and thence removed, another might run down a thread to the same spot from under the coat collar, being kept in position till needed by a needle passed through the bow, and withdrawn at the right moment by pulling a second thread attached to the needle. Yet again, a watch concealed at the outset in the trouser-pocket, or suspended on a dress-hook just below the vest, might be made at the proper moment to run down to a given spot on the trouser-leg. In fact, this simple little contrivance opens up a whole range of new effects to the imaginative performer.

Another telling effect, of a different kind, would be to privately hook an extra watch into the lining of a hat which has been borrowed and used for some other purpose, and then leave this, mouth downwards, on the table. At some appropriate stage of the trick the performer would "pass" the watch into the hat, and then, with bared arms and hands obviously empty, reach up into it and produce the missing article.

THE LOCKED AND CORDED BOXES (I.).

Twenty years ago, this was one of the "star" items of a conjurer's programme. Nowadays, in consequence of the prevailing craze for dispensing with visible apparatus, it is hardly ever seen. This is a pity, for it would be difficult to name a more effective illusion.¹ For the benefit of the younger generation, to most of whom the trick is absolutely unknown, I will briefly describe it. As a watch plays a prominent part in it, it may appropriately find a place in this chapter.

A borrowed watch, with possibly a ring or glove in addition, is wrapped in paper and tied round with

¹ The revolt against an excessive use of apparatus, such as was found in the days of Professor Anderson, was a movement in the right direction, but it has been carried to excessive lengths, and I am inclined to believe that there will be a gradual reaction. Perfect manipulation of cards, coins, or handkerchiefs will always command the admiration of the expert, and may serve well enough to fill the space of a music-hall turn; but for a whole evening's entertainment greater variety and broader effects are necessary, and these are to be obtained by the judicious use of stage apparatus. The perennial success of Mr. Maskelyne's entertainment is largely due to his happy combination of magical elements of wholly different kinds.

ribbon. The little packet thus made is loaded into the conjurer's pistol.

Presently he fires, taking as his mark a good-sized box, which, elaborately corded, has been in sight of the audience the whole evening, either standing on a side table, or, more frequently, suspended by a rope over the centre of the stage. The box being lowered and the cord removed, it is found to be locked, but the key is speedily discovered, say in a lady's muff, or hanging on to a gentleman's whiskers. The performer opens the box, and takes from it another box of similar appearance, and corded in like manner. This also being opened, another box is produced. The precise number of the series may vary, but it comes to an end with two boxes, locked but not corded. The innermost is handed to some lady to open, and within it is found the packet containing the borrowed articles.

The key to the mystery lies in the fact that the smallest but one of the boxes is bottomless. We will suppose that the series consists in all (as it most frequently does) of *four* boxes, of which we will call the largest No. 1, and so on. The performer stands either behind or just beside his table, on the servante of which rests, open, the smallest box, No. 4 (which, it should be mentioned, closes with a spring lock). The experienced reader will hardly need to be told that the packet containing the watch is not actually placed in the pistol, but is deftly exchanged, at an earlier stage, for another of similar appearance. At the first convenient opportunity, the performer drops the genuine packet into the box on the servante, and closes the lid.

When the performer, after firing, opens box No. 1

and takes out No. 2, he for a moment places the latter behind the former, which, however, he immediately afterwards puts aside, or hands to his assistant. No. 2 is then pushed to the front of the table, to make room for No. 3, which in turn is placed for a moment behind No. 2. Before taking out No. 3, however, and while in the act of pushing forward No. 2, the performer, with his disengaged hand, brings up No. 4 from the servante, and places this behind No. 2. No. 3 (which it will be remembered is the bottomless box) is then lifted out of No. 2, and brought down over No. 4, which is in due course produced from it, and the trick terminates as already mentioned.

It always seemed to me that the trick as above described, excellent as it undoubtedly is, lacked finish in one or two particulars. In the first place, the use of the bottomless box is somewhat hazardous; indeed, I once saw a very eminent performer "give away" the trick by an accidental exposure of this part of his apparatus. The other point is less serious, and is indeed merely a matter of artistic feeling. It appeared to me that, to make the trick perfect, *all* the boxes, down to the smallest, should be corded as well as locked.

The first defect I cured by having a box made with a loose bottom, folding up against the back. I could not have it hinged in the ordinary way, as the hinges would have been more or less visible. I hinged it therefore on pivots, working in slots in the sides of the box. These slots were curved, each forming an arc of nearly a quarter of a circle, and in length about half an inch. This arrangement allowed the pivots the necessary

amount of play, and enabled the bottom to sink fairly and squarely into its place. Mortised into the opposite end of the flap were a couple of spring bolts, which, when the bottom was down, made all secure. It could only be again released by pressing back both bolts simultaneously, and this could only be done by inserting a couple of pins through minute holes in the front. A little wooden wedge (removed by the performer at the right moment) prevented the bottom falling prematurely, but the moment box No. 4 was taken out it dropped spontaneously, locking itself as above described; and in this condition the box would stand the most minute examination without telling any tales.

We now come to the "cording" question. In the case of this same box, No. 3, the difficulty was that the cords must not cross the bottom, as they would in such case interfere with the introduction of No. 4. This difficulty I got over by inserting at each corner of the bottom of No. 3, and midway between each corner, a brass-headed nail, not driven quite home. The nails at the four corners were for appearance only, but by the aid of the other four a piece of doubled string was brought across the top, sides, and ends of the box, without crossing the bottom. The other boxes had nails in similar positions, the tacit suggestion being that they were merely placed there to serve as feet, and to prevent the bottom of the box scratching any surface it might be placed upon.

The cording of box No. 4 presented a problem of a different kind. This box must necessarily remain open until after the introduction of the packet, and there was clearly no time to cord it afterwards. I got over

this difficulty by cording it first, but the supposed cord was in fact white cotton-covered rubber, dyed a light brown to resemble string.

After being duly "corded," the box was opened a couple of inches or so, and the lid propped in that position with a bit of stiff wire, for the reception of whose ends minute depressions were made in the box and lid. The performer's hand, in introducing the packet, dislodged the wire, whereupon the box closed, the rubber cord contracted, and the box became to all appearance a genuine "corded box."

THE LOCKED AND CORDED BOX (II.). (*Hartz's Method.*)

I may here take the opportunity to give a brief account of Hartz's working of the same trick, which also has several points of difference from the current version. It belongs to what may be called his "mechanical" period, and in various particulars would be too elaborate for the taste of the present-day conjurer; but it is interesting as affording a further example of the artistic completeness with which, to the smallest detail, his illusions are worked out.

Like myself, Hartz had felt the bottomless box to be a weakness. He used in place of it a box with a bottom of blackened millboard opening in halves, like the familiar rabbit-trap, save that it opened upwards, instead of downwards. The introduction of the innermost box into this was effected by means of a special table, of small size, which in the first instance stood against the side-scene, and was not brought forward until needed to rest the boxes on. In the top of this table was a trap the exact size of the smallest box,

sinking horizontally on pressure, but normally pressed upwards, flush with the top of the table, by the action of a candle-spring. The top of the table corresponded in appearance with that of the box. On this table, until removed from the wing, rested an extra box, in appearance somewhat like a Chinese tea-chest, decorated with black and gold. It was of peculiar make; for the spaces at the back and bottom were left open until the box had served its purpose, when a movable back and bottom dropped into position. This dummy box masked an opening in the side-scene, through which, at the proper moment, the assistant passed the small box in which the watch was hidden, and lowered it down on to the trap (which was already depressed and secured by a spring catch), when it became, to all appearance, part of the table-top.

Hartz's method of working was as follows:

The performer begins by asking the loan of a watch, but finds the one offered unsuitable for the purpose, for as soon as he takes it in hand it begins to strike. (This effect, which always produces considerable amusement, is produced by a "repeater," hidden in the sleeve.)¹ This watch is therefore handed back as "no good." Another is borrowed, and another; but with the same result. After two or three attempts, a better behaved timekeeper is found, and the performer proceeds to wrap it up in a lady's handkerchief, also borrowed; but presently this watch too is heard to strike inside the package. Having got so far, however, the performer decided that he must make it do. For greater safety, he wraps the watch and handkerchief in

¹ For description of the special form of repeater used by Hartz, see p. 149.

a piece of paper, and these again in a second piece. At this last stage, however, an exchange is made. What he actually wraps up is not the watch, but a packet of similar appearance taken from the servante, and containing a wooden orange, with a watch movement inside it. (It should here be stated, by the way, that in wrapping the watch in the handkerchief, the performer takes care to make the resulting package as spherical as possible.)

The supposed watch, thus wrapped up, is handed to some lady for safe-keeping. She almost instinctively puts it to her ear to ascertain by sound if the watch is really therein. If not, she is invited to do so, and, as she naturally believes, hears the watch ticking inside. Meanwhile, the assistant, passing casually behind the table, secretly picks up the genuine package from the servante, carries it behind the scenes, and puts it into the little box, which he locks, and passes, as already mentioned, through the opening in the side-scene into the trap of the table.

The "corded box" is not, in Hartz's version, suspended, but nevertheless has remained in full view throughout the evening. At the commencement of the trick this is placed on the extreme end of the run-down, so as to be practically right among the audience. It is supported on four wooden balls by way of feet, each having a sharp metal point on its under side. These points pass through the baize of the run-down, and rest on parallel strips of brass beneath, thereby establishing an electrical connection between the box and a battery behind the scene.

No pistol is used, but the performer, at the proper moment, takes back the package entrusted to the lady.

He announces that he will pass the watch thence either into the corded box on the run-down, or into the one which previously rested on the side-table against the wing, and which, having served its purpose, is now brought forward, its back and bottom having now assumed their proper positions. The box on the run-down is natuarlly selected, as offering apparently the greater difficulty; the choice being really given merely in order to supply a plausible excuse for the presence of the black and gold box in the first instance.

The performer now opens the package entrusted to the lady, and finds the orange, which is taken to be a genuine one. At the same moment, the supposed watch is heard to strike within the corded box, proving to the minds of the audience that the demoralized timepiece has at that moment arrived therein. As a matter of fact, the striking is produced by a "repeater" movement in the bottom of the outermost box, set in motion by an electric current, as above indicated.

The small table which previously stood against the wing is now brought forward, and the boxes (*a* box, as the audience suppose) placed upon it. As each box is lifted out, the one which contained it is laid aside, and the last produced put on the table. From this point the trick proceeds after the customary fashion, save that when the box with the folding bottom (which is of metal, japanned) is reached and placed upon the table, the performer has only to draw back a bolt in order to make the final box rise automatically into it. When this is lifted out, the two millboard flaps of the penultimate box at once drop into their places, being pressed downward by thin steel springs soldered to the back and front of the box.

THE LOCKED AND CORDED BOX (III.). (*De Vere's Method.*)

The following ingenious and somewhat simpler version of the trick was communicated to me some years ago by Professor De Vere. For the sake of distinction I call it by his name, though I cannot be sure, at this distance of time, whether he claimed to be himself the inventor. It was at that time a "latest novelty," but I believe it is now common property.

The requirements for the trick are as under:



FIG. 110.

1. A large-sized coloured handkerchief, with a cheap watch in going order, wrapped in paper, and sewn in a pocket of the "patch" kind, in one corner.
2. A few pieces of paper about six inches square, of different colours.
3. Three pieces of ribbon, red, white, and blue, each about twelve inches long.

4. Three wooden boxes, of plain thin deal put together with French nails, three at each corner, as in Fig. 110. The lids are mere flat pieces of wood. There is no speciality about either of the two larger boxes, but the third is a "trick" box, being a sort of rough imitation of the familiar "watch" box. It is four inches in length, three in width, and two and a half in depth. One end of it is "faked," after the manner indicated in Fig. 111.

The two upper nails, *a a*, are mere dummies, being just long enough to penetrate the sides, but not the end.



FIG. 111.

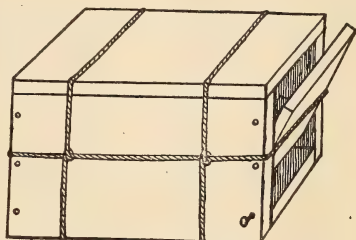


FIG. 112.

The nails *c c*, are a trifle longer, but fit loosely in their holes, so that they can be drawn out and pushed in at pleasure. When pressed home, they make all secure, but when drawn out, as in the figure, they allow the end to work backwards and forwards on *b b*, which are nails of full length, and act as pivots. This box is partially filled with cotton-wool, and is tied round with tape and sealed, but it will be observed (Fig. 112) that the tape is passed round it after a special fashion, so as not to interfere with the opening of the end.

Thus arranged, this box is placed in the second,

which is a good deal larger, the intervening space being loosely filled with paper shavings. This second box is tied up in the same way and placed in the third box, which again is a good bit larger, the intervening space being filled as before. The three boxes thus arranged (which may or may not have locks) are in view the whole evening.

To show the trick, a watch is borrowed from one of the spectators; a second chooses the paper wherein to wrap it; and a third the ribbon wherewith to tie it up. The packet is passed round for examination, any one marking it who cares to do so. The performer then takes it back and wraps it in the prepared handkerchief, really wrapping up the watch sewn in the corner instead, and dropping the packet containing the original into his right *profonde*. He lets the spectators hear the (dummy) watch ticking in the handkerchief; then, ordering it to pass into the box, shakes out the handkerchief, to all appearance, empty.

The performer now brings forward the nest of boxes, and gets some spectator to cut the tapes. While the general attention is thus diverted, he gets the packet containing the watch into his right hand. Taking back the box, he transfers it to the hand in which the watch lies (letting it rest on the palm, and thereby covering the watch). This enables him to allow any one who desires to do so to hear it ticking in the box (?).

The box is then placed on the table (the watch packet being deposited behind it) and opened. The paper shavings are removed, and the second box produced. The first box may now be put aside, the paper shavings masking the packet on the table. The second box is then opened, and, under cover of the removal

of the paper shavings from this, the packet is deftly inserted through the open end into the innermost box and the end closed. The loose nails are pressed home, and the box handed to some spectator to open, those who had marked the packet being invited to identify their marks.

THE FLIGHT OF TIME.

By way of conclusion to this chapter, I will describe a trick, or rather a combination of tricks, to which I gave the above title, and which I always found to produce considerable effect.

The requirements for the complete combination are as under:

1. Watch-box.¹
2. Repeater.
3. Pistol (ordinary), lightly charged with powder.

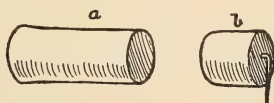


FIG. 113.

4. The wand known as the "swallowing" wand, described at p. 132.

5. An ordinary wine-bottle cork, as *a* (Fig. 113), and one half of a similar cork, into which is cemented, with sealing wax or otherwise, a pin bent at right angle, as *b* in the same figure.

6. A stout black pin, bent into an S-shaped hook.

¹ For description of the watch-box, see *Modern Magic*, p. 219. It need not be of the "ticking" variety.

This, which should have a sharp point, is hooked into the cloth of the right trouser-leg, just covered by the coat-tail, and at such a height that when the arm is dropped to the side the fingers can reach it comfortably.

The sliding tube for the wand may rest till wanted in the right pochette, or anywhere else, so long as it is readily get-at-able. The cork and half-cork should be in one of the ordinary tail-pockets, and the watch-box and pistol on the table. The repeater may be placed where and how the performer finds it most convenient to work it.¹

The patter may run somewhat as follows:

"I am always borrowing, ladies and gentlemen. This time I want to borrow a lady's watch. Thank you, madam. I suppose, by the way, this watch is all right? It's essential for this experiment to have a healthy watch." [He bends it backwards and forwards.]² "It seems a bit soft, somehow. Somebody has been sitting on it, I fancy. Anyhow, it seems a little bit poorly"—(he listens to the ticking)—"and the tick is n't quite right. It's a sort of *tic douloureux*." [Repeater strikes, and goes on to thirteen, performer counting the strokes.] "That's odd! I should be sorry to destroy your confidence in your watch, madam, but I really think, if it always strikes thirteen at a quarter past eight, it can't be quite well. I dare say, however, it only wants regulating. I'll regulate it for you by my patent process, and it will never go again—go wrong, I mean, again.

¹ I myself always used the Hartz form of repeater, described at p. 149.

² *Modern Magic*, p. 214.

"The lady seems to be feeling a little bit nervous. You're afraid your nice little watch may be hurt, madam. If you like, I'll give it gas, like the dentists. There's always plenty of gas at a conjuring entertainment. Or, better still, to relieve your mind, we will put it away in this little box. You shall lock it yourself, and keep the key. Now your mind will be quite at rest, won't it? We will leave the box here in full view, on the table." [In returning to the table he extracts the watch, but keeps it in his hand, covered by the box.] "One moment, though; I think I heard some one say the watch was no longer in the box. Let me satisfy you that it is; can you hear it, madam? and you?" [He holds the box out to one or two spectators in succession. Hearing the watch ticking in his hand, they are satisfied that it is in the box, and testify accordingly. Transferring the box to the left hand, he places it on the table, and at the same moment dropping the right hand to his side, hooks the watch on to the bent pin.]

"Now I shall want the assistance of some gentleman. Who will oblige? Thank you, sir. Face the company, please, stand upright, square your shoulders, and hold your hands clasped on your chest, so." [Performer, standing on left side of assistant, at the words 'square your shoulders,' presses him lightly on the chest with the left hand, and on the back with the right hand, as if merely to indicate the proper position. Meanwhile, however, the right hand dropping to the side has brought up the watch, still on the bent pin, and as it touches the back, hooks the point into the cloth of the coat, between the shoulders.] "Stop one moment. Show the company, please, that your hands are at

present empty. Good. Now clasp them in front of you, as tightly as you can.

"Now, sir, I am going to show you a rather curious effect. This pistol is loaded with 273 grains of a very powerful explosive (I have to be very particular about the quantity), and when I fire, it will blow the watch clean out of the box into your hands. I hope you are not nervous. There is really no danger—at least, none worth mentioning. I have performed this experiment nearly a thousand times, and I have never killed anybody yet,—unless he happened to move just at the moment I was firing. So don't move if you can help it. Now, steady! One, two, three!" [He fires.] "You don't feel mortally wounded anywhere? No? I congratulate you on your lucky escape. Hand the watch back to the owner, please. You haven't got it? You really didn't feel it hit you anywhere? No? Then it must be still in the box. You have the key, madam. Will you please unlock the box, and take it out yourself. What do you say? The watch is gone? Then, sir, it *must* be in your possession. Come, now, a joke is a joke, but it must not be carried too far. Kindly return the lady her property. You still maintain you haven't got it? But, my dear sir, I fired it straight into your hands."

After a little more by-play, the performer places himself so as to catch sight of the watch, and turns the victim round that the audience may see it also. He takes the watch, and in so doing detaches the hook.

"I see how it is. It was my mistake, after all, so I forgive you. I must have charged the pistol a little too heavily,—even half a grain makes a difference,—and it drove the watch clean through you. I am sorry

to see you look incredulous, ladies and gentlemen. You don't think I would deceive you about a little thing like *that!* But I can easily prove to you that there is no deception. If the watch did not go through the gentleman, how do you account for this hole through his body?"

In the course of his patter, the performer has taken from the pochette the little tube, and slipped it on the



FIG. 114.

wand, keeping it covered by his hand. Turning the victim with his right side to the company, the performer applies one end of the wand to his back, covering the mount with his left hand, as in Fig. 114, and with the right hand moves the sliding tube backwards and forwards, the arm screening the outer end of the wand. The effect to the spectators is that the visible part of

the wand shortens and lengthens, as if it was being actually drawn in and out of the body.

"This is an unfortunate accident, sir, but you know accidents will happen, even in the best regulated entertainments. You won't feel any ill effect from it, unless indeed you happen to get in the way of a draught, in which case you might have perigastric inflammation of the paregoric honorarium, which no doubt would be rather serious. So we must find some means of stopping the hole. Let me see, I generally have a cork somewhere about me." [Thrusting his hand into his tail pocket, he brings out the cork and the half-cork, the former openly, the latter hidden in the palm.] "Yes, here it is. If this fits, it will be just the thing." [Pretending to insert the cork in the imaginary hole, he in reality substitutes the half-cork, attaching it to the coat by means of the bent pin, in the position previously occupied by the watch.] "Capital! Now, sir, you have only to wear that cork for a few days, and you will be all right. What do you say? You would rather not wear it, even for a few days? Well, perhaps it does look a little conspicuous. Of course, if you object, I must take it out again." [He removes the half-cork, in so doing changing it for the whole cork, which he exhibits in its place.] "Fortunately, I can always fall back on the magic wand. It has never failed me yet, and I have no doubt it will help me on this occasion. In fact, you shall cure yourself. Take the wand in your own hand, and say 'Aldiborontiphosphicophormio.' Nice soothing word, isn't it?—but you haven't got it quite right; try again. That is better; the hole is closing already. Now please return the watch to the lady, and you will both live happy ever afterwards."

CHAPTER VI.

TRICKS WITH RINGS.

TO EXCHANGE THE RING OR RINGS.

AS with watches, so with rings; the first thing to be done is usually to get possession of the borrowed article by substituting another of like appearance in its place.

For combined neatness and simplicity it would be hard to beat the plan adopted for this purpose by Mr. David Devant. Having asked for the loan of a ring, he receives it on the tip of the outstretched forefinger, and so holding it in full view, returns to his stage, where he drops it (say) into a tumbler on the table. "All fair so far," is the natural reflection of the spectator. But the spectator doesn't know that at the outset, on the top of the second finger, which, with the third and fourth, is folded out of the way into the palm, the performer has a substitute ring. At any convenient moment during his transit, the middle finger flies up, and the forefinger is folded down in its place, this trifling movement being completely covered by the greater movement of the arm and body. It is therefore the substitute that is dropped into the glass, the original remaining in the performer's own keeping.

Some performers place the substitute ring on the forefinger, and receive the genuine ring on the second

finger, but I see no advantage in the change; indeed, Mr. Devant's plan appears the more natural.

Another method is to receive the borrowed ring on the end of the wand, and thence to let it slide into a glass or on to the table. Again nothing could in appearance be fairer, and yet the ring is changed in transit.

When the performer advances to take the ring, he has the substitute threaded on to the lower end of the wand, masked by the hand (say the right) which holds it. During the transit, he transfers the wand to the other hand, which seizes it by its free end. To facilitate this, that end is depressed, and for a moment is the lower of the two. During that moment the genuine ring slides down into the left hand, where it remains hidden, while the substitute, released from the right hand, takes its place on the wand. This plan has the advantage that, by preparing the wand accordingly, two or more rings can be "changed" at once, as easily as one only.

Again, a borrowed ring may be received in an ordinary wooden match-box, which is at once closed, and yet the ring passes instantaneously into the possession of the performer. I have said an ordinary match-box, and the description is correct as far as it goes, but the box must be "faked" a little to adapt it for this special purpose. The outer case is not interfered with, but on the inside of one end of the drawer portion (see Fig. 115) a cut is made with a sharp penknife from *a* to *a*, just deep enough to divide the wood, but not to injure the blue paper which forms an outside covering to this portion of the box. Further cuts are made from *a* to *b* at each corner, and another from *b* to *b*; all these,

however, dividing both wood and paper. The effect of this is that the portion so dealt with, $a b b a$, becomes a little flap-door, as indicated by the dotted lines, the blue paper left unbroken between $a a$ forming the hinge.



FIG. 115.

To prepare it for use, the box is opened by pulling out the drawer half-way, its "faked" end being thus brought to the centre of the outer case. The little trap-door is then pushed open. When receiving the ring, the performer holds the box with the fingers underneath and thumb above, under which conditions the ring naturally passes right through the box and falls into the palm of the hand. When it has duly arrived, a pressure of the thumb and fingers on the opposite ends closes the box, and at the same time brings back the little flap to its normal condition, the ring lying *perdu* beneath the box.

This little apparatus has the advantage of costing practically nothing. It is equally available for use with a marked coin or any other very small object.

TO CATCH RINGS ON THE WAND.

Three rings are borrowed, and collected by the performer on his wand, as above described. Thence they (in fact three dummies substituted for them as described on p. 190) are dropped into a tumbler upon the

table. The performer turns his back on them for a moment. When he again turns round, "Where are the rings?" They have left the glass, for he turns it upside down, and it is seen to be empty. After a little by-play, he declares that he sees them floating about the room, and will catch them on his wand. He rubs the wand a little to intensify its magnetic force, and then makes a slash with it in the air. A ring is seen to have been caught upon it. Another wave of the arm, and two appear, the third being next caught in like manner. Without removing the rings from the wand, he brings them forward, and has them taken off by their respective owners.

The disappearance of the substitute rings may be neatly effected by means of a bottomless tumbler (p. 92) and one of the pockets of the special table described at p. 86. It is best in this case to have only *half* of the bottom of the tumbler removed, that the rings may, by falling on the remaining half, make the sound that would be naturally expected from them. In default of a tumbler arranged as above, a piece of glass may be placed at the bottom of the pocket, and the rings allowed to fall through the tumbler directly on to this.

The pouring into the glass is, of course, but one of many possible methods of getting rid of the dummy rings. They may be placed in the brass plug-box, the Davenport cabinet, the watch-box, or the ring-box, made on the same principle.¹

In this particular, the performer may very well be left to his own devices, but the "catching" of the original rings on the wand is a novelty. For this pur-

¹ *Modern Magic*, pp. 192, 195, 219.

pose, he must be provided with a cap of thin brass (as *a* in Fig. 116) exactly fitting the end of the wand, and in appearance made to exactly resemble one of the mounts, so that, whether it be on or off the wand, it shall make no difference in the appearance of the latter. To the inner edge of this cap is soldered a bit of thin wire, about three eighths of an inch long, sloping slightly outwards. When the cap is on the wand, the appearance of the two is as *b* in the diagram.

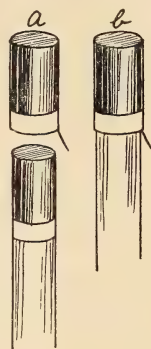


FIG. 116.

This cap the performer has under his vest, or in a pockette on his left-hand side. When he is about to begin the ring-catching, he gets this into his left hand, and slips it secretly on to the free end of the wand, on the opposite end of which, covered by the right hand, are the three borrowed rings. One of these he works quietly up between the forefinger and thumb. He makes a dash in the air, at the same moment releasing the first ring, which, under the impulsion of centrifugal force, flies to the opposite end of the wand, where its farther progress is checked by the little wire. The second and third rings are "caught" in like manner. He then says: "Before I remove the rings from the wand, I should like the owners to testify that they are really their own property, and that there has been 'no deception.'" So saying, he advances, holding the wand horizontally, one end in each hand. In removing the left hand, he draws off the cap within it, and then allows the owners themselves to remove their rings from the wand.

A BORROWED RING FOUND IN A POTATO.

This effective little trick, for which the conjuring fraternity is indebted to the clever American wizard, Mr. W. E. Robinson (now better known as Chung Ling Soo), is a more up-to-date version of the "Magic Ball and Rings," described at p. 231 of *Modern Magic*. In effect it is as follows: A plain gold ring is borrowed, and secretly exchanged, the substitute being entrusted to the keeping of some juvenile spectator invited on to the platform. Bringing forward on a plate three or four raw potatoes, the performer requests the audience to select one of them. The selection being made, he returns to his table, transfixes the chosen potato with a sharp-pointed wire rod about fifteen inches long,¹ and gives this to be held by another juvenile. Taking the (substitute) ring from the holder, he announces that he is about to pass it into the potato. The manner of its disappearance may be varied at pleasure. Thus he may get rid of it by simple palming (the "finger" palm being in this case the best), by means of a pull, or by placing it in the magic pistol and firing it at the potato.

Having got so far, he says, "The ring is now in the potato." Taking the latter from the holder, he cuts it in half crossways, still leaving the two halves skewered on the wire. "We don't seem to have come to it yet," he remarks. "By the way, which half of the potato would you like to find it in? Which piece shall it be, the right or the left?" The choice is made, and on the

¹ A large-sized wooden or bone knitting-needle makes a very good substitute.

chosen piece being cut open, the borrowed ring is found imbedded therein.

The first point to be explained is the preparation of the potato. Having selected half a dozen potatoes, as nearly alike in appearance as possible, you cut from one of them, with an apple-corer or a sharp knife, a tapering plug, a trifle larger in circumference than a lady's ring. This plug, which should extend well into the farther half of the potato, is then shortened by cutting an eighth of an inch off its smaller end, and the inner end of the cavity is scraped quite flat. In this condition the potato is placed in readiness behind the scenes. When the performer retires to fetch the plate of potatoes, he introduces the ring, which he carries off with him, into the cavity, replaces the plug, and tucks the potato, thus loaded, under his vest. In returning to his table, after an unprepared potato has been chosen, he deftly exchanges it for the prepared one, and impales this latter on the wire rod, the point passing through the centre of the plug, and consequently through the ring. When, having cut the potato in half, he asks the audience to choose, "Right, or left?" he stands holding the rod horizontally before him, the loaded half of the potato being, say, nearest his left hand. He then avails himself of the time-honoured *équivoque*. If the choice is "right," he says: "Your right? Very good!" If "left," he alters the phrase to "My left? Very good!"—the apparent "choice" thus falling in either case as he desires.

The unused piece, containing the plug, is carelessly thrown aside, out of the way of inconvenient inspection.

THE RING AND THE CARD.

A card having been drawn from an ordinary pack, the performer proceeds, by the aid of a stiletto, to make three holes in it; each about three eighths of an inch in diameter, in the positions shown in Fig.

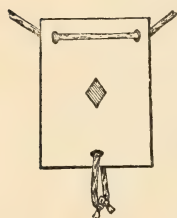


FIG. 117.

117. Through the two upper holes he threads a piece of silk cord or narrow ribbon about four feet in length, and attaches each end to the back of a chair, so that the card may hang, with its face to the company, suspended between them. Through the third hole

he passes a short piece (say, six inches long) of similar cord or ribbon, tying the ends together so as to form a hanging loop.

His next proceeding is to borrow a wedding ring, which, being a highly valued article, he places in a box for safe-keeping. He then announces that, by the aid of the magic wand, he will take the ring invisibly out of the box, and pass it on to the hanging loop of ribbon. Touching the box with the wand, he advances to the card, and gives it a gentle tap therewith, when the ring is instantly seen hanging from the loop, and is in due course identified by the owner, the box being found empty.

It is humiliating to have to confess that, notwithstanding this apparently irresistible evidence of identity, the ring which appears on the ribbon is *not* the one which was borrowed, but a substitute which has been well rubbed on one side with soft beeswax or dry soap. This may rest till wanted on a short nail or needle-point driven into the back of one of the chairs. In due

time the performer gets it into his hand and, under cover of the insertion of the short end of ribbon in the card, presses the waxed side against the back of the latter, in such manner that it shall surround the lower hole, the ribbon passing through it.

A wedding ring is now borrowed and is placed in some apparatus (such as the ring-box, or Davenport cabinet) which enables the performer to get secret possession of it. This done, he threads it privately on to the end of the wand, where it remains concealed by the right hand. When he desires to make the ring appear on the loop, a smart rap with the wand on the face of the card suffices to overcome the very slight adhesiveness of the wax, and to cause the dummy ring to fall into the loop, where it remains suspended. Under cover of the necessary untying of the knot it is an easy matter to exchange the ring for the original.

Another alternative is to cut the ribbon, thread the substitute ring on to the free end of the wand, and offer it on the wand to the owner, meanwhile making the change in manner described at p. 190.

Another and better method of causing the appearance of the dummy ring is by means of a silk thread passed through it beforehand and pulled at the right moment by an assistant behind the scenes. In this case there is no need for the performer to approach the card at all, after the preliminary arrangements have been made.

So soon as the ring has appeared, and is in the hands of the performer, the assistant releases one end of the thread, and draws it away by pulling on the other, or it may be cut by the performer in the act of cutting the loop of ribbon. The ring may in this case be professedly fired from a pistol, thereby enhancing

the effect of the trick, as the backward swing of the card, caused by the pull of the thread, is regarded by the audience as produced by the force of the shot.

THE MYSTIC GLOVE AND RINGS.

This is essentially a stage trick, and demands a good deal of preparation. The principal item of apparatus is a hollow glass column on a heavy metal foot, and standing about two and a half feet high. This is surmounted by a cylindrical metal cup, measuring, say, three inches across by two deep.

Briefly stated, the effect of the trick is as follows: Four rings are borrowed from different spectators, and placed in a pistol. A white glove, sometimes borrowed, sometimes the performer's own, is used as a wad. The column above mentioned is then brought forward and placed on a table. The performer fires at it. At the moment of the discharge the glove springs up, as if distended by the sudden insertion of a spirit hand, and remains (for a short time) erect on the cup at the top of the column. On each of the fingers is one of the borrowed rings, which are then taken off and returned to the owners.

So much for the effect; now for the explanation. The rings borrowed are exchanged, by one or other of the methods already described. The substitutes are placed in the pistol, and the originals passed off behind the scenes, where the performer's assistant places them in the cup at the top of the column. Fixed vertically within the cup is a short piece of brass tubing, about two inches in diameter and one and a half inches deep. A white glove is beforehand drawn over this tube as

far as the palm, and secured in position by a strong rubber ring passed over it. The assistant places one of the borrowed rings on each finger of this glove, and then folds down the fingers loosely into the cup.

When the column is brought forward, it is placed over a hole in a table, standing with its back against the side-scene. This hole forms the outlet of a rubber tube, which passes through the table to the retreat of the assistant behind the scenes. At the moment when the pistol is fired, the assistant blows vigorously through the tube.¹ The rush of air expands the glove, which springs up like an opening hand, with a ring on each finger, as already described.

The trick in this shape is a very old one, and was, in fact, one of the inventions of the arch-conjurer, Robert-Houdin, who worked it in conjunction with a shooting automaton. My chief object in here noticing it is to call attention to the somewhat different working adopted by Hartz, which is in several particulars an improvement upon that of Robert-Houdin.

The column, in this case, is of clear glass throughout; and is not brought on after the borrowing and passing off of the rings, but has been on the stage, in full view, from the very commencement of the performance. In place of the metal cup, it is surmounted by a solid block of wood, of about the same size, but hexagonal in form, and connected with the top of the column by means of a cork plug, also solid, on its under side. In conjunction with the column is used a small round table, having a polished blackwood top, and placed at the outset near the centre of the stage.

¹ In more modern times, pressure on an air-ball has been substituted for this rather elementary proceeding.

Three rings only are borrowed. The performer states that he is about to fire them from a pistol, and asks the loan of a glove to act as wad, but bethinking himself that the article may probably be damaged, ultimately decides to use one of his own. He tells his assistant to bring him a white glove and a piece of paper, which are accordingly brought in on a tray. This is placed on the little table above referred to, the column as yet standing back on a larger table.

Taking the borrowed rings, the performer places them on three fingers of the glove, making as he does so a running commentary on their appearance, that they may be afterwards the more readily recognized. Then holding the glove by the finger-tips, he brings it forward, that the owners may testify that the rings are really their own. Still holding the glove, fully displayed, in his left hand, he returns to the little table to get the piece of paper wherein to wrap it up, and during the transit gets from under his vest into his right hand a little cylindrical package, about two inches in length by one in diameter, folded in similar paper. This he palms. On reaching the table he folds the glove, with the rings still on it, into a small compass, lays it on the piece of paper, and wraps this round it, rolling it into a cylindrical shape on his knee. The ends of the roll are in the first instance left open. In folding them down he substitutes the dummy parcel, and lays this instead on the tray.

He next exhibits a pistol, already loaded with a very small charge of powder. In this he places the dummy packet and asks some gentleman to ram it down. Pretending to notice that the gentleman is nervous, he pours him out a glass of wine from a bottle standing

in readiness, and being, in fact, the trick bottle described at p. 50. He drops the genuine packet into the cavity in the bottle (which is forthwith carried off by his assistant). Laying aside the pistol for a moment he now brings forward the glass column. Removing the block of wood at top, he hands this first to be examined, leaving it, as comparatively unimportant, in the hands of the holder, while he himself passes on to exhibit the column to other spectators.

Meanwhile the assistant has in readiness behind the scenes another block, of similar appearance to that offered for examination, but of much more elaborate construction, representing, in fact, the "cup" of the earlier version.

Though solid in appearance, it is in reality hollow, the top being closed by what in stage parlance is called a "star" trap, as shown in plan in Fig. 118. The top is divided into six triangular segments, meeting in the centre. Each of these is hinged to one of the upper edges of the hexagon, so as to work in an upward direction with the utmost freedom.

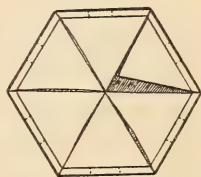


FIG. 118.

Within the block is a shallow brass cylinder, to which is secured, by means of a metal ring fitting closely over it, a white glove. As in the case of the solid block, there is a cork plug on the under side, but in this case a piece has been punched out of its centre, so as to allow the passage of air. The moment the assistant has carried off the bottle, he extracts the little packet, takes out the rings, and places them on three of the fingers of the prepared glove. Closing the trap, and making all snug again,

he returns to the stage and stands in a waiting attitude. The performer, still occupied in offering the column for examination, tells him to take the block from the gentleman who is holding it, and put it on the table. This he does, or apparently does, in reality substituting the prepared block, which the performer presently places in position on the top of the column, this latter being then placed on the little table, and the table on the end of the "run-down" farthest from the stage.

The table itself now demands a word of explanation. It stands on a central leg, branching into three carved feet. The leg is hollow, a plain brass tube extending from top to bottom, and communicating with a little hole bored in the centre of the table-top. In the tube is a piston, working easily, and normally forced upwards, nearly to the top, by means of a candle-spring, but capable of being pressed downwards by means of a rod inserted from above, and in that position held down by means of a spring catch; such catch, however, being withdrawable by the action of an electric current. From the catch, wires pass down two of the feet, terminating in sharp metal points, projecting from the under side of each.

Passing along the run-down, underneath the carpet, are two strips of brass, which are connected with an electric battery behind the scenes. So long as the two points above mentioned rest anywhere on the brass strips, they also are in electric connection with the battery. When the pistol is fired¹ at the column, the

¹ As the pistol contains only a light wad of paper, the discharge, if directed towards the stage, cannot do any damage. The better plan, however, would be to use such a pistol as described in *More Magic*, p. 442, in which the contents of the principal barrel do not leave the pistol at all.

assistant presses a stud which completes the circuit. The catch is withdrawn and the piston flies upwards. The column of air above it is forced up the glass pillar. The glove is distended and flies up into view, the segments of the trap making way for it. Each of these describes a three-quarter circle and falls right over, hanging when at rest against its own side of the block, which is so decorated that the new condition of affairs shall make no change in its appearance. It should be mentioned, by the way, that the foot of the column is flat on its under side, but has a cup-shaped cavity in the centre, which relieves the performer from the necessity of placing it *exactly* over the hole in the table.

The performer has only just time to remove the rings from the glove before it begins to sink down again, in consequence of leakage of air between the column and the table. The performer calls attention to this sinking, as proving that the sudden expansion of the glove was really magical, and not produced by any mechanical means.

I have described this illusion at exceptional length, as illustrating (apart from its intrinsic interest) the extraordinary amount of thought and labour a true artist will expend on the perfecting of a single trick. Genius has been described as "an infinite capacity for taking pains." Whether this definition covers the whole ground may well be questioned, but it is certain that taking pains is the only sure ground for success as a conjurer; and in this unlimited capacity for taking pains and ceaseless striving for the best effect possible, Hartz is not outdone even by the Master—Robert-Houdin.

THE WEDDING RING AND FLAG.

A wedding ring is borrowed and handed to some lady for safe-keeping. An ordinary tumbler, covered over with a borrowed handkerchief, is then entrusted to the same lady, with a recommendation to keep it well covered and to hold the ring tight, as otherwise the latter will slip away from her hand and fly into the glass. Pretending to perceive that she is getting anxious, the performer says he will wrap the ring in paper for her. He does so, but when about to return it to her, changes his mind, and says he will pass it into the candle on the table. On his bringing it close to the flame, the paper ignites with a flash and nothing is left, the ring having disappeared altogether.

The operator next exhibits a little silk flag of some conspicuous pattern, say the tricolour or Union Jack. He rolls it between his hands, when it changes into a quantity of flowers of similar colours. He pretends distress at the disappearance of the flag, as he says he had depended upon the flag to get the ring out of the candle. He asks the owner of the ring whether she will accept the candle in its place. Naturally she objects, and he makes believe to be in serious perplexity, when a happy thought strikes him. He asks the lady holding the glass to take off the handkerchief. She does so, and finds in the glass the missing flag, in which is wrapped the wandering ring.

The reader, being of the inner circle, will doubtless have made a pretty good guess at the working of the trick, though it is extremely puzzling to the uninitiated.

The borrowed ring is exchanged at the outset of the trick, by one or other of the processes already described,

for a substitute, and it is this latter which is really handed to the lady for safe-keeping. On a servante behind the table on which the empty glass stands is a similar glass, over which is placed a duplicate flag, having its centre pressed down into the glass, but the four corners hanging outside. When the performer, having borrowed a handkerchief, passes behind his table to pick up the visible glass, he drops the borrowed ring into the hidden glass, and consequently into the centre of the flag. While in the act of covering the visible glass with the handkerchief, he with the other hand turns in the overhanging corners of the flag, and exchanges the two glasses. For greater security he may, if he pleases, pass a rubber ring over the handkerchief, after which the glass is handed to be held as already described.

The bit of paper in which the substitute ring is wrapped is, of course, "flash paper," and the paper is so folded that as soon as the little packet is placed on end the ring slides out into the hand. There are various ways of folding a paper to answer this condition. Perhaps as good as any is the following: Taking the paper, which should be a little over three inches square, in his left hand, with the ring visibly secured against its centre by the forefinger, the performer folds down the upper third of the paper over the ring. He next proceeds to turn down the two sides, and lastly the lower third; but instead of folding these *forward*, as he did with the upper portion, he folds them *backward*. If the folding be quickly done, no one will perceive anything unusual about it, but the effect will be that the ring is left in an outer fold, formed by the centre of the paper and the portion first turned down.

This fold is open at its lower edge, so that the performer can secure the ring at pleasure. Before allowing it to slip out, however, he presses the folded paper smartly between finger and thumb, the result being that an impression of the ring, in bold relief, is formed upon it, proving apparently, up to the very moment when the paper is flashed off, that the ring is still therein; though, as a matter of fact, it has some moments earlier found its way into the *profonde*, or been dropped on a *servante*.

The change of the flag into flowers is effected by the use of the barrel-shaped colour-changing fake described in the following chapter. The flowers, which are of the usual "spring" kind, are packed into one end of the tube, and are forced out by the act of working the flag into the other, after which the "pull" carries the fake up the sleeve.

CHAPTER VII.

TRICKS WITH HANDKERCHIEFS.

UNTIL within the last few years, handkerchief tricks proper, *i. e.*, tricks in which handkerchiefs play the principal part, might almost have been counted on the fingers of one hand. Now, their name is legion.

As an accessory, the handkerchief has always been popular with conjurers. If anything had to be covered over, or wrapped up, during some process of transformation, a borrowed handkerchief was just the thing for the purpose, and one white handkerchief was so very like another than an article so enveloped was "changed" with special facility. But, until Buatier de Kolta showed the way, no one seems to have appreciated the intrinsic capabilities of the silk handkerchief as a magical "property"; and he indeed took advantage of them only to a very limited extent. But, the hint once given, others were not slow to make use of it, and handkerchief tricks, in one shape or another, now form a part of almost every magical programme.

The prime virtue of the silk handkerchief is its compressibility. To utilize this quality to the utmost, the handkerchief must be small (about fourteen inches square is for most purposes the best working size)¹ and the silk must be of a suitable kind. China silk, of a

¹ Where production in great numbers is aimed at, smaller handkerchiefs, down to ten inches square, are frequently used.

thin make, answers well enough; but the article generally preferred is a good French sarsenet. It should be passed once or twice through water, to remove the dressing, wrung out, and laid flat to dry, after which, and a little use, it will be in good working order. The extremely small space into which such a handkerchief can be packed is incredible to any one who has not actually tried it.

Silk has the further advantage that, owing to its elasticity, it expands, on being released, to a bulk out of all imaginable proportion to the space in which it has previously been confined.

The primary effects to be produced with handkerchiefs (apart from knot tricks, which come under a special category, and which I do not now propose to deal with)¹ are four in number, viz., magical production, change of colour, magical disappearance, and magical reproduction.

The power of producing a handkerchief or handkerchiefs apparently from nowhere has a double value. In the first place, the production is in itself a feat of magic; and in the second, it provides the performer with the precise article he requires for his subsequent manipulations, and excuses his non-adoption of his customary plan of borrowing; which in the present instance would for many reasons be inconvenient.

The subject of handkerchief tricks is so large a one that it will be well to treat it in separate sections, as above indicated.

¹ Readers interested in this branch of the subject will find much useful information in a little pamphlet entitled *New Handkerchief Tricks*, by Professor Ellis Stanyon.

Section I.

THE MAGICAL PRODUCTION OF HANDKERCHIEFS.

Methods of handkerchief production are very numerous. I proceed to describe a few of those found most generally useful.

THE FALSE FINGER.

One of the most ingenious methods of producing a handkerchief from the apparently empty hand is by

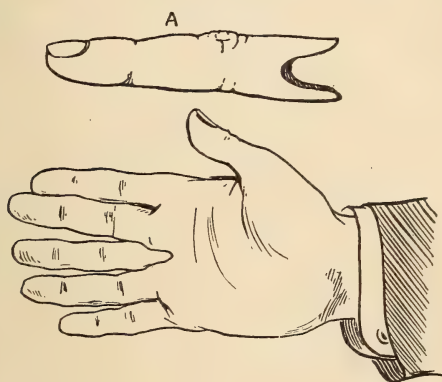


FIG. 119.

means of a false finger. Of these there are two or three kinds in use. The first (see Fig. 119) is made in imitation of the extended middle finger. It is of very thin brass, or better, celluloid, coloured to match the hand, and inserted when in use between the second and third fingers of the right or left hand as in the figure. It will be observed, on inspection of the detail drawing, A, in the diagram, that the finger is not chopped off square, as it were, but the metal is cut away on each side, so

that it tapers both at back and front to a rounded point. The fork thereby formed acts as a sort of clip to hold the finger in position; and, strange to say, the hand thus supplemented may even be shown full front, so long as it is not absolutely at rest, without any one noticing that it has an extra finger. With the hand held horizontally, the false finger is absolutely invisible.

For "production" purposes the handkerchief is beforehand loaded into the finger, the corner last inserted being left just within reach, at the bottom of the fork. The performer usually either comes forward with the finger already in place on the hand, or carries it in the trouser-pocket, at the right moment carelessly placing his hand therein, and bringing it out again with the finger in position. This, however, involves a certain amount of fumbling, which is best avoided. A better plan is to have a special pocket made to receive the finger at the back of the trouser-leg, level with the pockettes, and covered by the coat-tail. It should be of such a size as to accommodate the finger easily, while still keeping it stiffly upright, and of such a depth as to cover two thirds of its length. Carefully placed in such a pocket, the fork of the artificial finger at once meets the fork formed by the junction of the natural fingers, and the mere dropping of the hand to the side suffices to get the appliance into its proper position.

The actual production of the handkerchief is usually effected by bringing the hands together and working it out between the finger-tips. Mr. Maurice Garland was, I believe, the first to produce it by the aid of the one hand only—a material improvement. His plan is, under cover of a wave of the arm, to bend the sham finger over towards the ball of the thumb, when

its open end will naturally be between the thumb and first finger. The remaining fingers grip the "fake," while the above-named work the handkerchief out of it. With a little practice, this useful sleight can be performed as easily with the left hand as with the right.

A later pattern of "finger" permits of the hand being shown back and front, even at rest, without any visible addition to the number of the fingers. The extra finger in this case is constructed as in Fig. 120. It is somewhat shorter than the older form, representing only the two upper joints of the finger, and is provided with a spring clip, whereby it is attached, from the back, to



FIG. 120.

the lowest joint of the middle finger. When the palm of the hand is shown, this finger is kept straight, and the artificial finger is concealed behind it. When it is desired to show the back of the hand, the middle finger is bent forward; the make-believe taking its place between the first and third fingers.

Yet another form of finger for the same purpose is illustrated in Fig. 121. It is a triangular tin box, about three and one half inches in length and three quarters of an inch in depth.¹ The side *a* is rounded, and modelled in imitation of the back of a finger. The remaining two edges are square. At the smaller end is

¹ The precise dimensions may be a shade greater or less, to suit the hand of the performer. The wire may be bent into the shape found most convenient.

a spring clip *d*, whereby the fake, when in use, is attached from behind to the middle finger of the performer, the clip embracing the lower joint of that finger. The only access to the interior is through the open space marked *c*. The whole is coloured so as to match as closely as possible the hand of the performer.

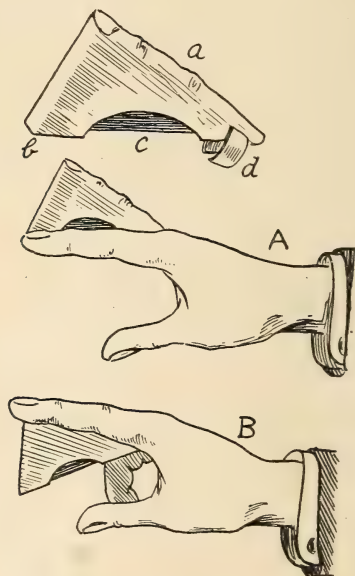


FIG. 121.

The mode of use is not unlike that of the finger last described. If the fake be duly clipped on behind the middle finger (see *A* in the figure), there is of course nothing visible on the inside of the hand, and this may therefore be shown freely. When the performer desires to show the back of the hand, he, under cover of a wave of the arm, tilts the middle finger forward. This brings

the fake into the position shown as *B* (in the same figure), its hinder part ranging with the first and third fingers, and representing, to a casual view, the natural middle finger.

The handkerchief to be produced is loaded into the fake, with one corner projecting, which corner, in use, is clipped between the first and second fingers. To produce it, the handkerchief, beginning with this corner, is gradually worked forward with the forefinger till the whole is developed, and the handkerchief produced with the one hand only, as in Mr. Maurice Garland's method. The fake is then removed under cover of the handkerchief.

The sleight is by no means an easy one, but in good hands it is wonderfully effective. This mode of production is one of the specialities of Mr. Imro Fox, who works it with remarkable dexterity.

An equally ingenious and less bulky appliance of Messrs. Hamley's for the same purpose takes the form of a shell (of tin or thin copper), fitting on to the back of the extended middle finger, which it is modelled to resemble. For the greater part of its length its edges are only turned down to the extent of one third of an inch, but at the centre of each side they are made somewhat broader, so as to clip the middle joint of the natural finger. The fake is of course coloured to match the hand. With it is used a very small silk handkerchief. This at the outset is laid along the shell, and the latter clipped on to the finger. The hand may then be shown freely, back and front, with the fingers slightly apart, thereby proving, to any one who may know the older method, that no extra finger is used.

This done, under cover of a slight movement of the arm, the performer bends the fingers and gets the fake inside the hand, when the handkerchief may be gradually pushed out with the thumb, and thus produced with the one hand only.

THE FALSE THUMB.

An appliance of Hartz's for handkerchief production (invented, by the way, long before the false fingers came into use) was a sort of thimble, made of very thin copper, and arranged to fit over the end of the thumb, which it was modelled and coloured to resemble exactly. In some particulars this appliance is even better than the false finger. Being shorter and wider than the latter, the introduction or extraction of the handkerchief becomes proportionately easier. Further, small as is the fear of the presence of the extra finger being noticed, a little extra length of the thumb is still less likely to attract attention.

History is said to repeat itself, and it often happens that an ingenious contrivance is independently re-invented at some later period. Messrs. Hamley have a special "finger," for vanishing a handkerchief, which exactly follows the principle of the Hartz "thumb"; being intended to fit over the forefinger. It is only an inch and three quarters in length, being in fact designed to represent the two upper joints of the finger. It is made of flesh-coloured celluloid, polished inside, but rough on the outside.

Its object is to cause the disappearance of a single handkerchief. The performer appears with the false finger covering the right forefinger, and the handkerchief thrown over it. In the course of his remarks as to the

volatile nature of this particular kind of handkerchief, he gets the false finger into the left hand, lying across the palm, with the opening towards the thumb. Closing the left hand, he begins openly to poke the handkerchief with the right forefinger into that hand, as shown in Fig. 122; in reality into the hollow finger. When it is fairly "home," the forefinger is brought away with the false finger upon it, the left hand being simultaneously opened and shown empty. If the hand is kept gently moving, the fake is, under such conditions, absolutely



FIG. 122.

invisible. From considerations of space, the handkerchief must be small and of specially thin material.

It is a good plan to have the finger, at the outset, thumb-palmed, after the manner of the thimble in the Flying Thimble Trick. (See *post.*) It can then be instantly transferred, when needed, to the finger-tip.

This appliance can, of course, be used for production as well as for disappearance, but it is scarcely so well adapted for the former use.

THE FINGER SHELL AND FALSE PALM.

Another appliance for handkerchief production is the "finger shell" (see Fig. 123), an oval piece of tin or thin

brass about two inches long by one and a quarter wide, painted flesh-colour, and having its longer sides bent slightly inwards. If the fingers are somewhat flexed, this may be laid against the lower joints of the middle finger, on the inside, without attracting any notice. Between this and the finger lies the handkerchief, folded accordingly, to be produced when wanted.



FIG. 123.

A couple of very thin wires are sometimes soldered across the concave side of the fake, about an inch apart, and no doubt help to keep the handkerchief in position. On the other hand they prevent the fake going so well "home."

Some performers have the shell adapted to the fork of the thumb, instead of to the finger.

Yet another method is to have a false palm, also of metal, and flesh-coloured, with a clip on either side to hold it to the hand. The handkerchiefs (one or more) lie between this and the real palm. It is possible that this plan may have some recommendations, but it strikes me as one of those "improved" methods which are best avoided.

THE RUBBER BAND.

The following little known method, the invention of Mr. Carl Posse, has the merit of special simplicity, and, neatly worked, is decidedly effective. The only apparatus consists of a thin band of red rubber, passed over the second and third fingers of the performer. The handkerchief is folded as small as possible, and placed in such manner that the portion of the elastic inside the hand shall lie just within the final fold. The handker-

chief is then pushed between the fingers to the back of the hand, naturally drawing a portion of the rubber ring with it. The inside of the hand may now be shown empty. In turning the hand over to show the back, which is done with a quick flourish, the fingers are spread apart and again closed, but in the momentary interval the tension of the rubber has brought the handkerchief back into the hand, to be produced at pleasure.

A little powdered French chalk, judiciously applied, will tone the colour of the rubber down to that of the performer's hand, and make it practically invisible.

PRODUCTION FROM BEND OF ELBOW.

A very simple expedient, adopted with good effect by Buatier de Kolta, was to place the handkerchief, neatly folded, within the bend of the left elbow. On coming forward, he drew up his sleeves and bared his arms, incidentally showing the hands empty. The right sleeve was first drawn up, and then the left, the act of drawing up the latter bringing the handkerchief quite naturally into the right hand.

PRODUCTION FROM THE TROUSER-LEG.

This mode of production has been already noticed in connection with the magician's dress (see page 6), as also the production of a single handkerchief from the coat collar. Either of these methods lends itself extremely well to the "multiplication" of handkerchiefs, a second, of the same colour, being drawn out under cover of the first.

THE HAND-BOX.

This appliance, described in its original form in *Modern Magic* (page 263), and in an improved shape in *More Magic* (p. 213), has undergone yet further improvements. It is still usually made in the shape of a miniature boot-heel; some patterns, however, have rounded edges, like the case of a watch. The opening may either be at the side or in the centre. The wax used by Buatier de Kolta to make the box adhere to the back of the hand is now usually dispensed with, and replaced by a loop of fine wire or gut. The thumb or forefinger, as the performer may find most convenient, being passed through this loop, the box can be brought to the back or front of the hand at pleasure.

At the outset, the appliance is at the back of the hand, so that the palm can be shown empty. In bringing the hands together, it is swung over to the front, and, when the handkerchiefs have been produced, is returned to its original resting-place.

Another description of hand-box takes the form of a short tin tube, about two inches long, oval in section, and having at the centre of each side a couple of projecting tongues, also of tin, soldered together at the base, but bent slightly outward at their free ends, as in Fig. 124. These are intended to be clipped between the second and third fingers, and so to maintain the apparatus at the back of the hand.



FIG. 124.

By means of the second pair of clips, it may be transferred to the back of the opposite hand, being brought

into the palm when the performer desires to produce the handkerchief.

THE CACHE.¹

The appliance which usually goes by this name is a little bag of stout leather, not unlike the familiar Portsea purse, but open at the top, without flaps. It has a loop of gut or wire, after the fashion of the improved hand-box, on each side, so that by insertion of the appropriate thumb it may be transferred from hand to hand. It is sometimes attached to a pull, but its

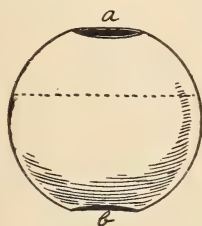


FIG. 125.

shape is unsuitable for this purpose. In this particular nothing can be better than the tapering tin or wooden cup used by Buatier de Kolta and described in *More Magic*, pp. 209, 210.

A rubber ball, with a piece cut out of the side, is sometimes used instead of the purse.² Some, again, while adhering to the purse shape, use flesh-coloured silk, in place of leather, for the material.

A third alternative is to use a flesh-coloured ball of

¹ This name is applied by German conjurers to the Buatier hand-box, secured to the hand by an adhesive.

² See *post*, in connection with the description of Mr. Stillwell's Handkerchief Act.

celluloid or thin brass, one and one half or one and three quarter inches in diameter, with a hole in its side, and suspended by a loop as already mentioned. Here, by the way, I must not omit to mention a new and especially ingenious form of ball for this purpose, the invention of Mr. John Hamley. (See Fig. 125.) It is about one and three quarter inches in diameter, with two holes, *a*, *b*, three quarters of an inch in diameter, on opposite sides of it. The intervening space is divided



FIG. 126.

horizontally by a partition (as shown by the dotted line) into two compartments of unequal size, the one being about twice as deep as the other. The ball is of celluloid, enamelled flesh-colour, smooth within, but on the outside left rough, that it may be the more easily palmed, no loop being in this case employed.

This ball may be used either to produce, change, or vanish a handkerchief. Its special feature is the hole *b*, opening into the larger compartment. The shallower compartment is intended for the reception

of one or more handkerchiefs. The larger may also contain a handkerchief, but its primary intention is that it shall accommodate the tip of the forefinger or thumb, when, with a little address, the performer may show both hands, back and front, apparently empty, though he has the ball literally at the tips of his fingers, masked by the one or the other hand in front of it. See, for example, Fig. 126, in which the ball rests, as shown by the dotted lines, on the tip of the right thumb. Having thus shown the palms, the performer has but to cross the hands slightly in the

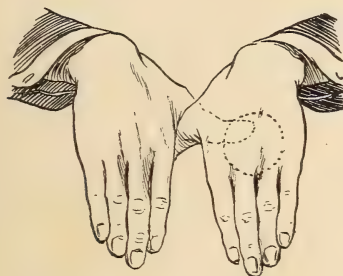


FIG. 127.

act of turning them down, working the ball round the left thumb, and he may then show the backs as in Fig. 127, the ball being now hidden behind the left palm.

The above is but one of many "passes" which may be exhibited with this ingenious ball, which is manipulated by the inventor with special dexterity.¹ It goes without saying that the finger-tip expedient is a power in reserve, so to speak, the ball being for the most part palmed in the ordinary way.

¹ Mr. Hamley himself prefers to work the ball on the forefinger.

At this point I may pause to anticipate a very natural inquiry of the reader, bewildered by the multiplicity of appliances for the same purpose. "Which of all these is the *best*?" In this connection I may recall an often quoted couplet of Pope:

"For forms of government let fools contest,
Whate'er is best administered is best."

In like manner, the method which a conjurer finds he can work most satisfactorily is, for him, *the best*, though there may be half a dozen "novelties" of later date for the same purpose. In point of *effect*, by all means seek after novelty, but in regard to artificial aids, it is by no means a certainty that the later appliance, however ingenious, will fulfil its purpose any better than, or even as well as, the good old fake, whose use custom has made second nature. Do not therefore jump at a "latest novelty"; but test it very carefully before abandoning an old one in its favour.

PRODUCTION FROM THE WAND.

This has been already discussed, in connection with the description of special wands for various purposes.

PRODUCTION FROM A MATCH-BOX.

For this clever little expedient the conjurer is once more indebted to the inventive genius of Buatier de Kolta. The sliding portion of an ordinary match-box is pushed out to the extent of, say, half an inch, and in the space thereby left vacant at the opposite end a handkerchief is packed. The performer, under pretext of lighting a candle, takes a match out of the box, which he

holds with the open end away from him. Having obtained the match he closes the box; the act of doing so squeezing out the handkerchief into his hand, to be produced according to his fancy.

THE "MONARCH" HANDKERCHIEF PRODUCER.

The appliance to which this name has been given is depicted at *a*, in Fig. 128. Two little semicircular horseshoes of metal are soldered together back to back, and from the point of juncture projects a straight slip of metal, at the further end of which is a loop of fine wire. The whole is enamelled flesh-colour. The "fake" is held



FIG. 128.

in the hand, as shown in the figure, between the second and third fingers, the two forks keeping all secure. Packed tightly within the wire loop is a small silk handkerchief. The handkerchief, thus disposed, may be passed between the fingers to the back of the hand, and then to the front again, with great ease.

After proving the hands empty in this way, the handkerchief is in due course worked out of the loop and produced. By reversing the process, the fake may be used for vanishing a handkerchief, at the pleasure of the performer, but it is not so well adapted for this purpose.

CLIPS FOR HANDKERCHIEFS.

Clips, for the purpose of holding one or more handkerchiefs, are now and then very useful, and may be of the simplest possible construction. A strip of zinc or thin copper, three inches long and one wide, bent in half and having a small hole punched through it near each edge of the folded portion, will answer the purpose excellently. Through the holes are passed, from the outside, the ends of a short piece of thin cord. These being then knotted together, the cord forms a loop of convenient size for suspending the clip to a hook sewn to the waistband of the performer's trousers, in front under the vest. A handkerchief, folded to a convenient size,¹ is placed in the clip, the two sides of which are then pinched together with finger and thumb till it is securely held. Thus loaded, the clip is suspended as above, when the handkerchief will be instantly get-at-able.

In another variety of clip the loop is replaced by a ring of fine black wire, unpolished, one and one quarter inches in circumference; and the clip and handkerchief are bestowed either just inside the opening of the vest, or in a pocket, opening vertically, on the right side of the vest, about level with the armpit; the ring remaining outside, and being so turned as to project at some-

¹There is considerable art in folding a handkerchief for magical production, the desideratum being that it shall pack closely, and yet unfold spontaneously and rapidly. To ensure this a good plan is to fold it backwards and forwards in accordion-pleats one and one half inches in width, and when the whole length is thus taken up, to fold the strip thus made in like manner. A handkerchief thus dealt with, on being released, unfolds instantly.

thing like a right angle. The performer, after baring his arms and showing his hands empty, as further evidence of "no preparation" draws apart the lapels of his coat and shows his breast. The position of the hands in doing this enables him to pass the thumb of the right hand into the ring, and so to draw the clip into the palm. After producing the handkerchief the clip is thrown over to the back of the hand, and both hands are left apparently empty.

For this mode of production, however, a clip is not really necessary, and indeed is better dispensed with, the wire alone being all that is needed. Take a piece of fine wire eight inches long; cross the ends so that the central part shall form a circle about one and one quarter inch in circumference. Twist the wire twice where the ends cross. Place the folded handkerchief in the external angle thus formed, cross the extreme ends of the wire around it and draw them tight, finishing off by twisting them two or three times. Cut off any surplus wire close to the twist and place the handkerchief thus secured inside the vest as above described, the loop first made projecting from it. When the handkerchief is once in the hand, suspended from the thumb, the wire is broken, and the handkerchief is free.

A NOVEL METHOD OF PRODUCTION.

Last, but not least, I may mention a very ingenious method of production, for the knowledge of which I am indebted to Professor De Vere, already mentioned.

By the aid of a needle pass a piece of black thread, about eighteen inches long, with a knot at one end, through the sleeve of the performer on the inside, just

at the bend of the elbow. Removing the needle, attach the free end of the thread to the head of a pin. Roll a silk handkerchief into as small a compass as possible, and fasten off the last corner by thrusting the pin through it. Then, using the pin as a cleat, wind the slack of the thread round and round between the pin and the handkerchief, till just so much of it is left as to allow you to tuck the little parcel inside the breast of the waistcoat, on the left side. Properly adjusted, the thread will not at all interfere with the use of the arms.

When it is desired to produce the handkerchief, the performer bares his arms, and in the act of showing his hands empty twists the right thumb under the thread, and extends the arms. This movement draws the little packet into the right hand, the thread unrolling as it goes. The pin is then removed, and the handkerchief expands to its original dimensions.

Section II.

THE MULTIPLICATION OF HANDKERCHIEFS.

This is, of course, only another form of production, but there are one or two methods which are better adapted to cause the appearance of a second or third handkerchief than for the production of the first one. These I proceed briefly to notice.

FROM THE SLEEVE.

To one corner of each of two handkerchiefs, of same colour, attach a loop, six inches long, of flesh-coloured silk. Pass one of these over the second finger of each hand, and work the handkerchief down on the inside of

the arm, within the shirt-sleeve. Having produced, by one or other of the methods already described, a handkerchief of similar appearance, take it by one corner between the forefinger and thumb of the right hand, and draw it slowly through the left, from below upwards. Repeat the process, but this time pass the second finger of the right hand within the loop, when the concealed handkerchief will be drawn out, side by side with the other. Shake out, and show as two. Now draw both handkerchiefs through the opposite hand, bringing the third with them. Again shake out, and show that the two have become three.

The silk thread forming the loop should be merely passed through the corner of the handkerchief, so that when the silk is broken, it may come away "all clear."

CONRADI'S MULTIPLYING TUBE.

This (see Fig. 129) is a glass tube, of the lamp-chimney order, divided into two compartments, *a* and *b*, longitudinally, by two slips of looking-glass cemented together, back to back. Round each end of the tube is a band of brass or white metal; and between these bands, at equal distances, are four upright strips of the same material. Two of these coincide in position with the edges of the mirror partition. The other two occupy positions midway between these, each exactly facing the medial line of one of the mirrors, and being reflected therein. The effect, to the eye of a spectator, is that he sees right through the tube; the reflection of the forward strip being taken for the hinder strip,



FIG. 129.

which is in reality hidden from him by the mirror between.

To prepare the tube for use, one of the compartments is packed with silk handkerchiefs (all of one colour); of which half a dozen or more can be inserted without difficulty. In this condition, with the loaded compartment to the rear, the tube may stand on the performer's table, or be brought forward held horizontally between his hands, apparently empty. In the course of his "patter," he places in the empty compartment a single handkerchief of the same colour as those to be produced, spreading it well in the tube, so as to occupy as much space as possible. The tube may now be shown on either side, for both look alike. The performer turns the side with the single handkerchief to the rear, and produces, first, two or three handkerchiefs in succession from the front compartment; then the single one from the rear compartment, and finally the remainder from the front.

As the reader will doubtless perceive, the above order is adopted because, if the production of the single handkerchief were left to the last, it would have to be produced from an apparently empty tube. The performer may, however, by way of variety, produce it in this manner. He should in such cases blow upon the (supposed) empty tube, at the same moment giving it a half-turn, thereby bringing the single handkerchief to the front, after which it may be produced in the usual way.

I may here take the opportunity to mention a little appliance of my own devising, which I have found extremely convenient for producing two or three handkerchiefs in rapid succession. It consists of a piece of

tin, two and a quarter inches square, shaped as *a*, Fig. 130, and bent over vertically until it forms a three-quarter tube, as *b* in the same figure. This, enamelled flesh-colour, and loaded with three or more silk handkerchiefs, is palmed in the right hand; the upper indentation resting against the top joint of the middle finger, and the lower on the root of the same finger. The handkerchiefs are now pushed upwards in succession with the thumb, and appear at the tips of the fingers.

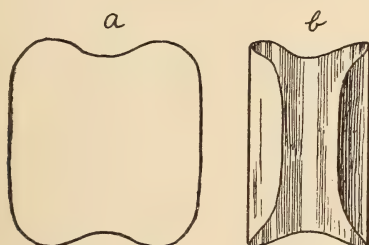


FIG. 130.

It should be noted that this, besides being much larger, reverses the arrangement of the "finger shell"; inasmuch as it is palmed, and used, with the opening outward.

BLACK, RED, AND WHITE.

The effect of this capital trick, for which I am indebted to the magical serial *Die Zauberwelt*, is as follows:

The performer shows his hands, back and palm, proving them entirely empty. Bringing them together, and making a rubbing movement, he produces from

between them a black silk handkerchief. This again being rubbed between the palms, a red handkerchief is produced. The two are now rubbed between his hands, and a white handkerchief is seen to be added to their number, after which all three are made to disappear one by one in like manner.¹

The only apparatus needful consists of the three handkerchiefs themselves, but these are prepared in a special manner. The white handkerchief (see Fig. 131) has in one corner a triangular pocket *a*, made of the same material as the handkerchief itself. In point of

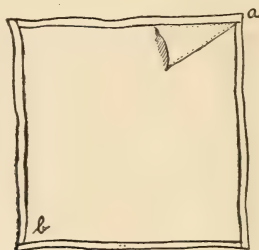


FIG. 131.

size this pocket is just large enough to accommodate the second handkerchief, *viz.*, the red one (which is without preparation). The black handkerchief has *two* such pockets, one placed as *a* in the figure; the other, a trifle larger, at the opposite corner, *b*.

The handkerchiefs are prepared for use by packing the red handkerchief into the pocket of the white one. This is then folded up tightly, and stowed into the smaller pocket of the black handkerchief. This in turn is rolled up, beginning with the corner *a*, and tucked

¹ It will be remembered that black, red, and white are the German national colours.

into its remaining pocket at *b*. In this condition it forms a small cone. To the apex of this cone is attached a loop of horsehair, large enough to admit the passage of the thumb. The cone is stuck on a pin, inserted point upwards under the right lapel of the performer's coat, with the hair loop projecting a little beyond the edge of the lapel.

Thus prepared, the performer advances, wand in hand. Placing this for a moment under the right arm, he shows the hands empty. Again he takes the wand in his hand, and in doing so, deftly slips the thumb of the right hand within the horsehair loop, and with a slight upward movement lifts the little parcel off the pin, when it lies suspended against his palm. Laying the wand on the table, and standing so that the back of the right hand shall be towards the spectators, he rubs the hands together, and, under cover of the rubbing movement, gradually works the black handkerchief out of the pocket and spreads it out; holding it with the pocket side away from the spectators, the pocket which is still full being masked by the hand which holds it. Under cover of this handkerchief he presently produces the white handkerchief, and a moment later the red handkerchief.

To conclude the trick, the handkerchiefs are in due order again worked into their respective pockets, and the finally resulting parcel is vested, or dropped upon a servante.

A bit of very fine wire may, if preferred, be substituted for the horsehair. In consequence of its greater stiffness, it will be found to retain the circular shape better, and so to render the introduction of the thumb more easy.

HANDKERCHIEF MULTIPLICATION ON A LARGER SCALE.

The ease with which a handkerchief can be produced, apparently from nowhere, and the really magical effect of such production, if neatly executed, have induced some performers to enlarge upon the idea, producing not one or two handkerchiefs only, but a score, or even a larger number.

The first handkerchief, produced by one or other of the methods already described, is drawn through the left hand, when the one handkerchief becomes two. The operation being repeated, the two become three; the three become four; and so on. When the performer finds his hands getting fuller than is convenient, he lays all but one of the handkerchiefs on a table, or across the back of a chair, and begins again; continuing in like manner till all the available chairs and tables are draped with silk of various colours.

This surprising effect is usually produced by the aid of one of the hollow balls already referred to. This may be of celluloid, aluminium, or thin brass, about one and three quarter inches in diameter; and should have a hole in its side of about three quarters of an inch. A ball of the above dimensions will hold, closely packed, about half a dozen fine silk handkerchiefs of the size usually affected by conjurers (twelve to fourteen inches square), but by the use of a very simple artifice, it may be made available, so far as the eye of the spectator is concerned, to produce just double that number. The plan adopted in this case is to cut each square in half diagonally from corner to corner, hemming the raw edge. A half-handkerchief of this kind, held up by either of the two divided corners, and

allowed to hang straight down, will so drape itself as to represent, to casual observation, a complete handkerchief, and count accordingly.

The method adopted for packing the handkerchiefs into the ball is as follows. The first is pushed in pretty much anyhow, until it comes to the last corner. This is folded back three quarters of an inch. The *first* corner of the handkerchief next to be inserted is then folded in like manner, and the one hooked, so to speak, into the other. The second handkerchief is then worked into the ball, care being taken not to disturb the above-mentioned arrangement; and the last corner of this is then linked in like manner with the first corner of the next handkerchief, and so on till the ball is full. The final corner of the last handkerchief is allowed to project about half an inch.

One method of production is as follows: The ball, loaded as above, is vested. The performer produces a single handkerchief in any manner he pleases, and while calling attention to this, held in the right hand, gets the loaded ball into the left, where it is palmed, with the opening outwards. Holding the visible handkerchief by one corner between the right forefinger and thumb, he throws it over the back of the left hand, and draws it downwards through the hand. As the finger and thumb pass the palm of the left hand, he catches hold with them of the corner left projecting from the ball, and so draws out the handkerchief last inserted therein. This is drawn down with the original handkerchief through the half-closed left hand, and the two are then exhibited, professedly as the first transformed into two. The interlacing of the corners, as above described, has the effect of drawing the first

corner of the second handkerchief a little way out of the ball, in readiness for the next production, and so the effect is repeated till the ball is empty.¹

The more artistic method of working, however, is that adopted by Mr. Stillwell, whose Handkerchief Act, a speciality of his own, has met with great success.²

In this case the operator, after getting the ball into his hands and showing by the familiar "change over" pass that both are empty, leaves it finally palmed in the right hand. With this hand he makes a grab in the air, and professedly "catches" a handkerchief, which, however, remains invisible till it is transferred, still invisibly, to the left hand, when it at once "materializes." This effect is produced by the thumb and finger of the left hand nipping the projecting corner of the handkerchief as the hands come together, and, as they separate, drawing it out of the ball. The remaining handkerchiefs are "caught" one after another in like manner, not becoming visible till they are placed in the left hand.

Here, by the way, I must not omit to notice one very elegant little sleight, on which the effect of the trick

¹ Some performers sew the ends of the handkerchiefs lightly together with very fine silk, which is broken in the act of production. This is unnecessary. The interlacing of the corners, if carefully done, is not only less troublesome, but more reliable.

² Mr. Stillwell has drawn up an elaborate explanation of the above act, which is well worth the attention of every sleight-of-hand conjurer. The copyright of the pamphlet, which costs two shillings, has been acquired by Messrs. Hamley Brothers.

I may here mention that Mr. Stillwell uses rubber balls, instead of celluloid. The complete act involves the use of five such balls, of different sizes and descriptions. These also may be obtained of Messrs. Hamley.

largely depends. Its object is to convince the spectators that the hands, save for the handkerchiefs already produced, are throughout entirely empty.

The first handkerchief, we will suppose, has been produced by the aid of the hollow ball as above mentioned. It is then taken by one corner between the first and second fingers of the performer's left hand, as shown in Fig. 132, the palm being towards the spectators. The

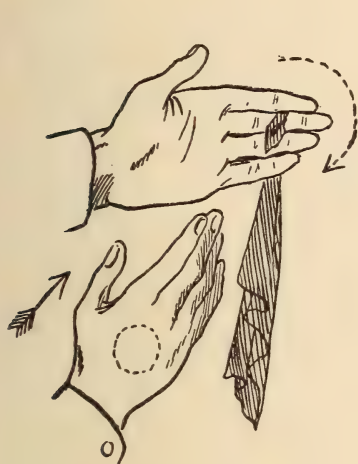


FIG. 132.



FIG. 133.

right hand is now brought up to the left, and transfers the ball from the palm of the former to that of the latter. The moment the ball reaches the left hand, this is turned over towards the body (as shown by the dotted arrow) and the right hand strokes down the handkerchief, the two hands assuming the position shown in Fig. 133. The ball is at this stage palmed in the left hand.

The right hand is now left empty, and is carelessly

shown to be so. The performer then brings it once more up to the left hand. So soon as this latter is masked by the right it is turned over outwards as shown by the dotted arrow in Fig. 134. The moment the hands come together, the ball is again palmed in the right hand. The left hand continues its outward revolution, the handkerchief passing over the tips of the fingers, and hanging from the back of the hand,



FIG. 134.

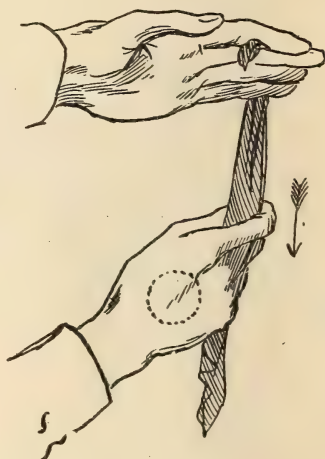


FIG. 135.

as in Fig. 135. The right hand strokes down the handkerchief as before. Nothing happens this time; but on a second stroke-down another handkerchief is drawn out from the ball with the forefinger and thumb of the left hand. This is placed side by side with the handkerchief already produced, and the above manœuvres repeated, the impression left on the mind of the spectator being that he has been repeatedly allowed to see both palms empty simultaneously, though as a matter

of fact he has never seen more than one at a time, the ball being concealed in the other.

By having half a dozen balls, duly loaded and distributed in various places, the performer may amplify the trick to any extent he pleases. He may even carry two or three balls under his vest, but where more than one are bestowed in this manner, they should be supported by wire "clips," after the manner of those familiar in connection with egg tricks, save that in this case the rings which hold the ball are both of the same size.¹ A truly artistic performer, however, would scarcely get two balls in immediate succession from the same quarter; but would vary his procedure as much as possible. Thus, a second ball may rest on a servante behind the chair on which he places the handkerchiefs already produced; when, in the act of throwing them over the back, he will have ample opportunity to exchange the ball just emptied for a full one. When this has done its duty, it may be dropped into the *profonde*, or laid upon the table simultaneously with a further pile of handkerchiefs, while another is procured from a *pochette*, and so on.

It is a good plan to vary the "production" by now and then exhibiting with the handkerchief just produced some little feat or sleight, say the "colour change" described at page 258, or the instantaneous knot, of which an example is given in *More Magic* (page 203); "the handkerchief that cannot be tied in a knot"; or "the vanishing knots" (*Modern Magic*, pages 237-238). In the case of the latter, the trick being here

¹ Clips of the kind above referred to (see p. 81) are largely used in connection with various ball tricks.

introduced as a mere passing flourish, the performer should himself tie the knot. It is not worth while to delay the performance by asking a spectator to do so.

Another effect that is frequently introduced is the simultaneous production of a given number of handkerchiefs. The spectators are asked to name a number,—“not too large,”—the performer remarks,—“say anything from five to ten.” We will suppose that the number named is seven (a very frequent choice, by the way). While the number is being decided upon, the performer palms, from under the vest or elsewhere, a roll of handkerchiefs of various colours, which he presently develops by rolling between his hands, and, counting them one by one, shows that there are the precise number demanded.

To enable the performer to do this, five handkerchiefs, each cut in half from corner to corner, are required. The halves are then lightly basted together with silk thread of the same colour. The thread is not fastened off at either end, so that the halves may be pulled apart again without difficulty. If five handkerchiefs are demanded, the performer shows each in its joined condition. For each extra handkerchief required, he pulls one of them in half, and shows each half, hanging down, as an independent handkerchief. The five thus become any number up to ten, at pleasure.

To produce a final effect the performer may have twenty or thirty handkerchiefs, packed close and secured by a silk thread or rubber band, inside the front of his vest, with a projecting loop for their readier extraction. This packet is drawn into the hands under cover of rubbing together half a dozen of the handker-

chiefs already produced, which are forthwith found to have multiplied five-fold. The quantity may be further multiplied by having other packets in convenient spots, as the arrangements of the stage permit.

The trick may be brought to an effective finish in another way, as follows. When he has got half-way through the trick, the performer says: "I really don't know what to do with all these handkerchiefs. Will somebody lend me a hat to put them in?" A hat being procured, he places it on the table, loading into it, in transit (say from under the left arm), a special packet of handkerchiefs, made up as follows: First, a piece of silk a yard or more square, is rolled up as closely as possible; round it another piece not quite so large; round that again another, a little smaller; the last, or outer handkerchief, being eighteen inches square. These are kept all snug by a pin. The performer transfers the handkerchiefs already produced to the hat, and then proceeds to produce others, which he adds to their number; finishing up with a score or so at once, as last described. Gazing seriously into the hat, he says: "I don't know what you think, ladies and gentlemen, but it seems to me that this is getting monotonous. And, unless I am much mistaken, the handkerchiefs are getting bigger, as well as more numerous." So saying, he dips his hand into the hat, withdraws the pin from the roll, and taking the outer handkerchief by one corner, draws it slowly up till it comes away from the rest, and exhibits it. Dropping it back into the hat, he produces the next in like manner, and so on to the largest, which he spreads out before him. "Yes, ladies and gentlemen, I must stop. That's the worst of magic.

When you once set the spirits to work, you never know quite where they will leave off. I have had this same sort of thing happen before, and when my wife was going to send the things to the wash, there was n't a handkerchief smaller than a table-cloth in the house.

So, with your permission, we will pass to the next item of the performance."

By way of variation, the following method of producing the first handkerchief may be used.

The handkerchief is prepared by first starching one of its extreme corners, twisting the starched portion into a "tag" half an inch long, and letting it dry. This done, the handkerchief is laid flat, and its three other corners folded to the centre. The sides are next folded down longitudinally, and this is repeated till the handkerchief becomes a mere strip, an inch and a half wide. The strip thus made is rolled up tightly, beginning from the folded end. When the opposite end is reached, the roll is finished off by gumming a bit of thin paper, of the same colour as the handkerchief, across the starched corner just below the little tag, which is allowed to project about three quarters of an inch beyond it.

The roll thus made is palmed in the left hand. The performer's first step is to show his hands empty by means of the "change over" palm. To conclude, he shows first the backs, the hands being held horizontally in front of him, the left a little in advance of the right. They are instantly turned outwards and the palms shown, but during that first moment the handkerchief has been transferred to the back of the right hand, the little tag being clipped between the second and third

fingers. If it is properly placed, and the gummed paper has been correctly adjusted (both of these are points to be got right by practice), the mere act of bending the fingers smartly will suffice to tear or detach the paper, and if a catching movement is made at the same moment, the handkerchief will at once expand to its normal dimensions, the effect to the audience being that it is really "caught" in the hand.

The starching of the corner of the handkerchief, as the reader will doubtless have surmised, is to make it more easily got hold of. As an alternative, the corner may be simply drawn together with a needle and thread till it assumes the desired shape, but the starching gives it greater solidity. Gum or paste may be used in place of starch, if the latter is not obtainable.

Section III.

COLOUR-CHANGING TRICKS.

The reader may be interested to know that this very popular form of illusion originated in a chance remark made some twelve years ago by Mr. G. W. Hunter to Mr. David Devant, that it would be a pretty effect to pass a handkerchief in at one end of a paper tube, and bring it out, of some different colour, at the other. Mr. Devant was struck with the idea, and within a week exhibited the trick for the first time, in a comparatively crude form, at the Royal Music Hall, London, where he was then performing. He had even then so far improved upon Mr. Hunter's suggestion as to colour three handkerchiefs instead of one, but over a year elapsed before he had worked up the trick, in combination with other handkerchief effects, to the complete

and artistic form in which he now presents it. The hint once given, however, there were speedily a dozen Richards in the field, each presenting his own version. Many of them are extremely ingenious, and leave little to be desired in point of effect, though personally I have seen none to equal the absolute perfection of Mr. Devant's method. Of this the reader will be enabled to judge for himself, inasmuch as it will be found described in full in the section devoted to "Miscellaneous Handkerchief Tricks."

Meanwhile I proceed to describe the different competing methods of producing this particular illusion.

VARIOUS METHODS OF COLOUR-CHANGING.

The Conradi multiplying tube, described at page 227, may equally well be used for changing the colour of a handkerchief. The one compartment is beforehand loaded with, say, a red handkerchief, and this side kept to the rear. The performer, showing a blue one, introduces it into the vacant compartment, and holds the tube horizontally between his hands, breast high. "Change," he says, and as he speaks, lowers the hands sharply about ten inches, immediately bringing them back to their former position. Under cover of this movement a half-turn is given to the tube, and the red handkerchief brought to the front.

The little apparatus described at page 220 of *More Magic* in connection with a "multiplication" trick is likewise available for colour-changing, but the pattern there indicated may be improved upon by making the tube somewhat barrel-shaped, as in Fig. 136, this form

lending itself better to the ultimate retreat of the apparatus up the sleeve.

The pull may, if preferred, be dispensed with; in which case the wire fork will likewise be unnecessary. In its place a loop of flesh-coloured silk or fine gut will be attached to the little barrel, and passed over the fore-finger so that it may be brought to the front or the back of the hand at pleasure. The apparatus may at the outset be loaded with three handkerchiefs of different colours. A fourth handkerchief, first spread out, and

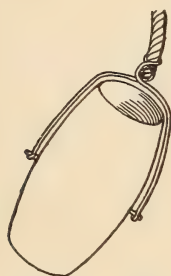


FIG. 136.

then crumpled together, is pushed in at one end of the fake; pushing out the one at the opposite end, and this may be repeated till three "changes" have been effected. This done, the handkerchief last produced is thrown over the tube, which may then be got rid of without difficulty.

Closely akin to the above is a little piece of apparatus, the invention, I believe, of Professor Ellis Stanyon. It consists of a tube of thin brass, two inches long and one inch in diameter, along the side of which is soldered a piece of wire with its ends turned up at right angles, as

Fig. 137. The space between the projecting portions is one and one half inches, and their length half an inch.

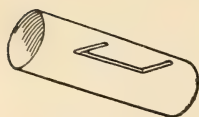


FIG. 137.

Crossing the centre of the tube, on the inside, is fixed a piece of tape two and three quarter inches in length. The slack, or central portion, of this may be pushed to either end of the tube at pleasure, forming

a sort of makeshift bottom, or stop, to prevent the contents escaping at that end.¹

The projecting points, being clipped between the fingers, enable the performer to transfer the fake to the back of the hand, and so to show the palms empty.

ROTERBERG'S COLOUR-CHANGE.

The following ingenious mode of colour-changing is the invention of Professor Roterberg, of Chicago, a gentleman to whom the conjuring world is indebted for many clever novelties.²

To one corner of, say, a blue silk handkerchief is sewn, by its longer sides only, a strip of the same material, two and one half inches long by one and one half wide, forming, when thus attached, a little pocket open at each end, as shown in Fig. 138. Midway down this pocket is sewn a little silk bag of the same material, as

¹ This feature is not new, being common to many handkerchief tubes. A still better arrangement is to have a little circular silk bag, of the same diameter as the circumference of the tube, and half its depth, secured by its upper edges midway in the tube. The bottom of this bag can, like the tape, be brought to either end of the tube at pleasure.

² Messrs. G. Ornum & Co., 4 Duke Street, Charing Cross, are Professor Roterberg's London representatives.

indicated by the dotted lines. In the hem of each of the openings, *a*, *b*, is sewn a ring of fine, soft wire.

The handkerchief is prepared for use by packing it, through the opening *b*, into the little silk bag. At the proper time the little bundle thus formed is palmed, a red silk handkerchief being openly shown in the same hand. The hands are now brought together, and waved up and down; the red handkerchief being under cover of the movement gradually worked into the opening *a*, thereby forcing the blue handkerchief out through *b*. When it is all out, the performer gently presses the

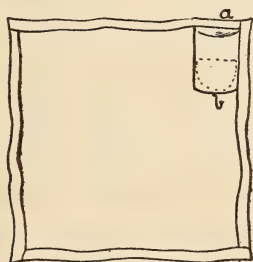


FIG. 138.

two wire rings, thereby closing the little pocket, and shakes out the blue handkerchief, the slight bulge made by the pocket being masked by the fingers of the right hand.

By substituting an appropriate flag for the blue handkerchief, and somewhat enlarging the pocket, three handkerchiefs,—red, white, and blue,—may be rubbed together (really worked into the little pocket) and reproduced as the Union Jack or tricolour.

The “cache” described at page 219 may by a little modification be adapted for colour-changing. For a

double change, say, white to red and red to blue, it should be made with three compartments, lying one upon the other. Two of these are loaded with red and blue handkerchiefs respectively, while the third is empty. The handkerchief to be changed is worked into the empty division, at the same time the one to be produced is worked out of one of the others.

MARCELLIN'S COLOUR-CHANGE.

This change, the invention of a German conjurer, is worked on a totally different principle. A blue handkerchief, say, is rolled round the centre of the performer's wand. The operator rubs it between his hands, and it forthwith changes to a red one.

Such is the effect of the trick. To work it, the performer must be provided with a wand of polished black wood, and a couple of tubes, two inches in length, fitting easily over it. These may either be of thin brass, or of rolled paper of sufficient stiffness, in either case japanned black, so as to correspond in appearance with the wand, under which conditions their presence upon it is, at a few feet distance, not noticeable.

Round one of these tubes a red silk handkerchief is tightly rolled. Over this a little piece of blue silk (the same material as the second handkerchief used in the trick) is placed, and secured by tucking in its edges between the handkerchief and the tube. In this condition it is vested, or placed in a pochette. The second tube must be also placed so as to be easily get-at-able.

Having shown, in a casual way, that the wand is without preparation, the performer gets the empty tube into his hand, and secretly passes it over as far as

the centre. Showing the blue handkerchief, he winds it, apparently, round the middle of the wand, but really on the little tube, and makes all secure by tucking in the final end. Showing the wand, in a careless way, in the one hand, he gets the prepared tube into the other, and, under cover of a half-turn to right or left, passes this over the wand with the one hand and slides the first tube off with the other. This he gets rid of by bringing forward a chair (professedly to lay the wand upon), and in the act of doing so drops the tube into a bag servante behind it. Placing the wand (which, to the eye of the spectator, still has the blue handkerchief round it) on the seat of the chair, he explains that these blue silk handkerchiefs are very bashful, and that if you look at them much they will blush, just like a young girl. In fact, he declares that the handkerchief is turning red already. The spectators naturally fail to perceive any alteration, so after a little more "patter" he takes the wand in his hands to hasten the process. Rubbing the handkerchief between his hands, he removes the blue silk covering, which he rolls up small and tucks between the second and third fingers. He then unrolls the handkerchief, which has now turned to red, and in the act of laying it over the back of the chair gets rid of the tube and the little bit of blue silk, into the servante.

COLOUR-CHANGING BY THE AID OF A PAPER TUBE.

The great majority of colour-changing tricks, however, follow the line originated by Mr. David Devant, viz., to show a piece of thin cardboard or stiff cartridge-paper; and after forming this, in view of the audience, into a hollow cylinder, to pass a handkerchief in at one

end of the tube, and, pushing it through, to produce it at the other end a different colour. Of this main idea, there are many variations in detail, both as to working and as to precise effect. I will commence with the simplest method, designed to change a single handkerchief.

The requirements are two silk handkerchiefs, one red and one white, a small piece, say five inches by eight, of stout drawing-paper, gummed along one of its shorter edges, and a little tube of sheet brass, one and one half inch long and one inch in diameter,¹ with the edges turned in very slightly all round. This is loaded with, say, the red handkerchief, and laid on the performer's table; the white handkerchief lying, as if thrown carelessly down, in a heap over it. If the performer uses a chair servante, the tube may be laid on this, and the handkerchief thrown over the back of the chair.

With regard to the introduction of the tube within the paper cylinder, there are two alternatives. One method is to make the cylinder first, and afterwards introduce the tube; the other to pick up tube and paper together and form the cylinder round the tube.

If the first plan is adopted, it is important that the cylinder should be exactly the right size. This is secured by rolling the paper experimentally beforehand, and making a pencil-mark showing exactly where the outer edge of the roll should come. In exhibiting the

¹ The size of the tube will vary a little, according as one or more handkerchiefs are intended to be produced; and with it the size of the paper to form the cylinder, which should, generally speaking, be about three times the length of the brass tube. The larger the cylinder, the stiffer must be the paper, or cardboard, of which it is formed.

trick, the paper is rolled to the same point, and then secured by moistening the gummed edge with the tongue and pressing it down. This, however, with an empty cylinder is rather a troublesome process, besides being somewhat lacking in refinement. A better plan is to keep the paper tube in shape by passing over it a couple of rubber bands, one at each end. The cylinder thus formed may be handed for examination, or the performer may prove its emptiness by holding it aloft on his wand.

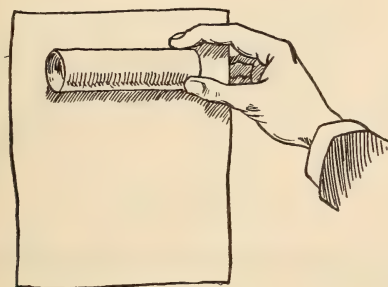


FIG. 139.

The alternative plan, of forming the cylinder round the wand, is decidedly preferable, and in connection with this plan I may here digress for a moment to describe a pretty little sleight which the performer will find very useful, after he has picked up the paper with the tube behind it, to convince the spectators that he has nothing in his hands save the piece of paper only. The paper is held by its upper right-hand corner between the first and second fingers of the right hand, the tube being supported in a horizontal position behind its upper edge by the forefinger and thumb, as shown in Fig. 139. Remarking, "I have here a piece of plain

paper," the performer takes the left-hand bottom corner between the first and second fingers of the left hand and turns the lower edge of the paper upwards towards the spectators. When it has reached the position shown in Fig. 140, the left thumb and forefinger seize the tube. The right hand moves away, and the original upper edge of the paper, now become the lower, is released. Both sides of the paper have thus been shown, and the paper and tube remain in the left

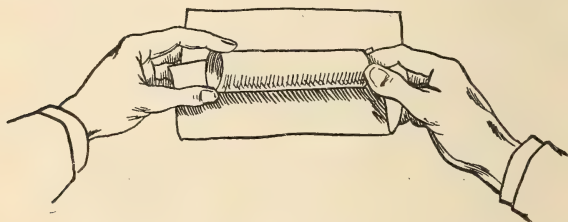


FIG. 140.

hand, the transfer from hand to hand being a sort of tacit guarantee of "no deception."

We will assume, however, for the moment that the first plan has been adopted, and that the paper cylinder has been formed apart from the tube.

The operator picks up the white handkerchief, and with it, secretly, the loaded tube. Holding the paper cylinder vertically in one hand, he throws the white handkerchief over its upper end, its corners hanging down around, and begins with his wand to press down its centre into the cylinder, meanwhile introducing the loaded tube from below. This, once inserted, is pushed up towards the centre of the cylinder, and there held fast by pressure of the hand on the outside. Mean-

while, the white handkerchief, being packed in from above, and pressed down, forces out the red handkerchief below, the white having apparently changed to red. As a matter of fact, the white handkerchief has taken the place of the red in the little tube, which a little later is allowed to slide out of the cylinder into the hand, and is got rid of as may be found most convenient.

The above is, however, a very crude form of the trick. A great improvement is to have the brass tube fitted midway with a little silk bag of half its length, the bottom of which can be brought to either end of the tube at pleasure, and so made to close that end.¹ This, loaded with, the red handkerchief, is introduced into the cylinder with the open end downwards. When, a little later, the white handkerchief is put in at the top of the cylinder and rammed down with the wand, it squeezes out the red handkerchief, and takes its place in the tube, but cannot go too far, being stopped by the silken bag. Under these conditions the packing of the white handkerchief fairly within the tube is a matter of much greater certainty, and the tube is more easily got rid of afterwards.

A further improvement is to load the little tube with two handkerchiefs, first a red and then a white one. The visible white handkerchief being then put in at the top of the cylinder, and pushed down, a white one makes its appearance at the bottom; being to the eye of the spectator the same handkerchief, merely pushed through. The natural inference is that the cylinder is empty. The handkerchief thus produced is then put in at the top, pushed down, and forthwith reappears,

¹ See note on p. 244.

as a red one, at the bottom, the two white handkerchiefs remaining in the tube.

Starting with the same root-idea, Herr Willmann has evolved a very highly finished and artistic version of the trick. I cannot do better than borrow his own description ¹ in a slightly altered form.

WILLMANN'S COLOUR-CHANGE.

The requirements for the trick are as under:

1. Four white handkerchiefs.
2. One blue handkerchief.
3. One yellow “
4. One red “
5. A servante consisting of two cup-hooks (as described at page 23), attached to the back of a chair.
6. A piece of very thin cardboard or stout cartridge-paper, measuring 7 by 8 inches, gummed along one of its shorter edges.

The red handkerchief (see Fig. 141) is in reality two handkerchiefs sewn together at the edges. Between them, midway in one of the sides, a tube, *a*, of thin brass, is stitched by means of three or four minute holes in its upper end, in such manner that that end shall come just level with the edge of the double handkerchief, and so shall, when the handkerchief is spread out, be invisible. The presence of the tube naturally creates a hiatus between the two handkerchiefs at the centre. This is filled up by a gusset, *b d c*, of the same material. In the centre of this is a hole, *d*, encircled by a rubber band, which allows of its being expanded to nearly the

¹ *Die Zauberwelt*. Vol. vi., pp. 43, 56.

circumference of the tube, but normally contracts it to a very small size, so as to be scarcely noticeable. Round the other three sides of the square $b e f c$, the two handkerchiefs are sewn together, the intervening space forming an internal pocket, only accessible through the tube a , which is open at the bottom.

To prepare the handkerchief for use it is folded first vertically in half, at the point where the tube is fixed. Beginning from the folded edge, the handkerchief is

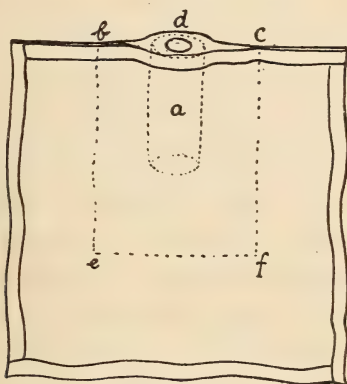


FIG. 141.

then rolled up, with the tube in the centre. Grasping the tube end with the right hand, the operator tucks the lower portion of the handkerchief into the tube *from the bottom*, pushing it in as far as it will go. This leaves a portion of the tube still unoccupied, and into this vacant space he packs, first the yellow, then the blue, and lastly one of the white handkerchiefs. In packing in the handkerchiefs it will be found desirable to start with one corner, so that the opposite corner shall be the last portion to be inserted, and

consequently the first to be squeezed out at a later stage of the trick. Each should be got well home before another is introduced.

The double handkerchief thus prepared, and forming now a compact roll only a trifle larger than the tube itself, is made to rest on the two hooks behind the chair.

The above arrangements duly made beforehand, the conjurer advances to the company, bringing forward the piece of cardboard and the three remaining white handkerchiefs. Placing the latter upon the seat of the chair, he calls attention to the piece of cardboard, and beginning from one of its shorter sides, rolls it into a cylinder, then allowing it to expand again. The cardboard naturally retains a certain amount of curve, and taking advantage of this, he places it over the back of the chair, where it rests comfortably, half in front, the other half behind, just over the prepared handkerchief.

Showing his hands empty, he again picks up, with the right hand, the bent cardboard, and with it the concealed roll. Again he rolls the cardboard into a cylinder, gradually making it smaller and smaller till it fits tightly over the roll, this latter resting with its upper end (the one with the hole *d*) within half an inch of one end of the cylinder. When matters have reached this point, he moistens the gummed edge of the cardboard with his tongue, and holds it down till there is no fear of its again unrolling.

Then, grasping the cylinder with the left hand (the end with the tube uppermost), he takes one of the white handkerchiefs, and pushes it down, first with the fingers and then with the wand, apparently into the empty cylinder, but in reality through the hole *d*, and into the tube. As the tube is already full, something

must give way to make room for it, and this something is naturally the white handkerchief which was the last to be packed into the opposite end of the tube, and which now begins to appear at the lower end of the cylinder. To the eyes of the spectators this handkerchief is the same they have just seen introduced at the top, and they are thereby convinced (if indeed they entertained any doubt on the subject) that the cylinder is empty. The operator must of course take care that the handkerchief shall not fall out at the bottom before the one at the top has completely disappeared, or the inference would be in the contrary direction.

Taking the white handkerchief just produced, he now passes this in through the hole *d*, remarking that he is going to change its colour and turn it blue. Accordingly the blue handkerchief, which comes next in order in the tube, appears at the bottom of the cylinder. Laying this on the seat of the chair, he takes another of the white handkerchiefs, presses it in at the top, and produces it (apparently) at the bottom, yellow. Throwing the yellow handkerchief on the chair-seat, he takes the remaining white handkerchief, and pushes this likewise through *d*. This forces out that portion of the red handkerchief which was packed into the tube, and which now appears at the bottom of the cylinder.

This is a critical part of the trick, for the white handkerchief is naturally introduced at the top in an "anyhow" fashion, whereas the red one would, if permitted, come out at the bottom rolled up, which fact, if observed, would tend to create a doubt as to their being, as the conjurer professes, the same. To avoid this, as soon as the white handkerchief is fairly within *d*, and the red handkerchief pushed down to within half an

inch or so of the bottom of the cylinder, the performer changes his procedure. Inserting a finger at the top of the cylinder, he gets hold of one of the upper corners of the handkerchief and holds it securely against the inner surface of the cylinder. Inserting the forefinger of the other hand, he now tears the cylinder open, and as it falls, getting hold of the opposite top corner of the handkerchief (the two lie, as will be remembered, one upon the other) he draws them apart; spreads the handkerchief; shakes it out, and then catches it by the centre, taking care that the hidden tube shall hang on the side remote from the spectators. Picking up the blue and yellow handkerchiefs, he transfers them to the same hand, then laying all three on the table, and proceeding to some other trick.

The trick is not an easy one, and demands a very considerable amount of study and practice before it can safely be exhibited. There are many little details, such as the exact degree of compression with which the handkerchiefs should be packed, which can only be ascertained by repeated experiment. But in skilful hands the trick produces a complete illusion, and it is well worth the amount of trouble necessary to bring it to perfection.

A SIX-FOLD COLOUR-CHANGE.

The requirements for this form of the trick (which also is Herr Willmann's) ¹ consist of a couple of metal bands, say seven inches in length by one in width, each slightly curved longitudinally and having at equal distances on its convex side three spring clips, and on the

¹ *Die Zauberwelt*. Vol. vi., p. 170.

concave side a couple of little hooks, sharp enough to penetrate clothing. In each of the clips is placed a handkerchief (all of the same size but of different colours) folded as small as possible. By means of the little hooks these two bands are attached to the upper part of the performer's trousers, one on each side, just underneath the vest, in such manner that the handkerchiefs shall be out of sight, but instantly get-at-able.¹ The colours should be of the most every-day kind, and arranged in the clips in a regular order, always adhered to, say (beginning from the left): 1, black; 2, red; 3, green; 4, blue; 5, yellow; 6, brown.

The performer advances, holding a white handkerchief in his hand, and asks some one to name a colour. "Red," we will suppose, is the reply. Now red, as the performer knows, is No. 2, on his left side. While calling attention to the white handkerchief in his *right* hand, he makes a half-turn to the left, and while that side of his body is thus turned away from the audience he gets the red handkerchief into his left hand. Under pretence of rubbing the hands together he gradually folds up the white handkerchief; and when this is done shakes out the red one, getting rid of the white one, as may be most convenient, into the *profonde* or otherwise.

If one of the colours on the *right* side is called for, he takes the visible handkerchief in the left hand, and makes the half-turn to the right, so that that side of his body may be screened from view. The performer may

¹ The clips might equally well be fixed on a belt of leather or webbing (due provision being made that it shall not shift from its position) and this would seem in some respects to be the preferable arrangement.

bring the trick to a neat finish by "vanishing," in any way he pleases, the handkerchief last shown.

Herr Willmann's description seems to contemplate that all six colours shall be produced in succession, but to do this would be to sin against one of the cardinal precepts of conjuring, *i. e.*, to avoid repeating the same trick in the same way. The performer would be better advised, in my own opinion, to retain the six-fold provision of handkerchiefs, but to produce not more than two of them. Having in these instances shown his ability to produce the colours the spectators ask for, it is reasonable to suppose that he could have produced any others, and the trick gains nothing by repetition. Further, there is scarcely enough in it to make it worth presenting alone, but introduced as an addendum to some more important handkerchief trick, it would form a really good item, both gaining by the combination.

TO CHANGE THE COLOUR OF A HANDKERCHIEF BY
MERELY DRAWING IT THROUGH THE HAND.

Several attempts have been made at obtaining this very pretty effect, but with comparatively small success, until the production by Messrs. Hamley of the little piece of apparatus I am about to describe, a marked improvement on all previous attempts in the same direction. It consists of a cup-shaped metal shell, as shown in Fig. 142, enamelled flesh-colour; open at top to its full extent, but having a somewhat narrower opening (*a a*) at bottom. Two thirds of the way down, it is divided in two by a horizontal partition *b b*. A little above this it is traversed by a spindle *c c*, on one

end of which, outside the cup, is fixed a little pulley-wheel, *d*. On this wheel is coiled a piece of black thread, a trifle longer than the diagonal length of the handkerchief to be used. Below the wheel is a little bracket *e*, and the thread passes downwards through a hole, *f*, in this bracket, the pressure of a tiny spring preventing its unwinding spontaneously or too freely. On the free end of the thread is a knot, *g*, and in the centre of the spindle is fixed a little hook, *h*, consisting of the point of a needle slightly curved. A portion of the metal cup is cut away on one side, as shown in the

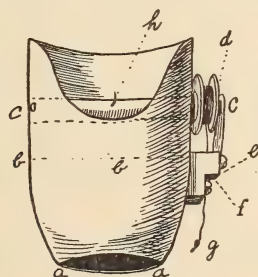


FIG. 142.

diagram, to enable the performer, when occasion requires, to get at this little point without difficulty.

Assuming that a red handkerchief is to be changed to a blue one, the latter is loaded into the fake through the opening *a a*, a bit of one corner being left projecting. The thread is wound up on the wheel until only half an inch or so hangs down below the bottom of the fake. When the performer desires to show the trick, he palms this in the left hand, with the opening *a a* downwards, and the little wheel on the side next the fingers. Exhibiting the red handkerchief, he hitches one corner of

it on to the little hook, allowing the remainder to hang down over the back of his hand, which is towards the spectators. To all appearances, he has merely tucked the corner of the handkerchief in between the forefinger and thumb. With the forefinger and thumb of the right hand he nips the projecting corner of the blue handkerchief, and at the same time the knot on the thread, and draws both slowly down together. As the blue handkerchief is drawn out of *a a* the red handkerchief is wound up on the little spindle, apparently changing into a blue one.

When the performer has once made a fair start, he should make a partial half-turn to the left, so as to bring both handkerchiefs into view, otherwise the blue handkerchief does not become visible until the first half of the red one has been wound up, and the trick loses a considerable portion of its effect.

THE BRASS TUBE, WITH SLIDING CUP, FOR COLOUR-
CHANGING TRICKS.

This (see Fig. 143) is a tube of thin brass, *a b*, about two and one half inches in length by one and a quarter in diameter, open at each end, but with the edges turned in to the extent of one sixteenth of an inch. Within this is a smaller tube, not quite an inch deep, open at top, but closed at bottom, and so forming a cylindrical cup. This fits the outer tube accurately, sliding up and down it, and so can be shifted to either end at pleasure, but cannot be removed from it, by reason of the turned-in edges of the tube.

This little appliance may be utilized for various colour-changing tricks. To take the simplest possible

example: the lower end *b* of the tube is beforehand loaded with, say, a red handkerchief. In packing it in, the operator commences with the centre, and then tucks in the corners, one after another. This not only precludes the possibility of a stray corner getting between the inner and outer tubes, and so causing a "jam," but also ensures a more rapid and complete unfolding of the handkerchief when it is produced in the course of the trick. The handkerchief, thus compressed into as small a space as possible, should lie just above the bottom of the tube, with the cup *c* pressed gently down upon it.

The tube, thus prepared, is palmed by the performer. Calling attention to a piece of thin white cardboard about five inches by seven, gummed along one of its shorter sides, and showing that it is otherwise free from preparation, he forms it into a tube, which he finishes off by moistening the gummed edge. In so doing, however, he secretly rolls up the brass tube within it. He makes the paper cylinder of such a size that by pressing on it he can retain the tube at any given point, though it will slide out as soon as the pressure is relaxed.

Holding the cylinder so that the end *a* of the tube shall be uppermost, he takes a handkerchief of some other colour, say blue, and introduces this at the upper end (packing it in after the fashion already described), and pushes it down with his wand. When it is fairly packed into *c*, he presses it down still farther. This forces *c* to the bottom of the tube, and in so doing drives out the red handkerchief at the bottom of the

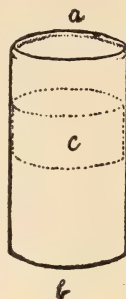


FIG. 143.

cylinder. To the eye of the spectator the blue handkerchief has changed into a red one.

By reversing the cylinder, and pushing in the red handkerchief at what then becomes the upper end, it may be made apparently to change once more to blue. This done, the performer lets the tube slide quietly out of the paper cylinder on to the servante, or elsewhere out of sight, after which the cylinder may be freely left in the way of inspection, without any fear of its telling tales.

The above is, however, but a crude and amateurish mode of using the apparatus. By way of further illustration I cannot do better than quote the description of a trick arranged by Herr Willmann, in which it is employed much more effectively. The "patter" affords an amusing illustration of "ourselves as others see us," and in particular of the light in which our German friends regard our salubrious Metropolitan Railway.¹

The requirements for the trick are as under:

1. The tube, with sliding-cup, as above described.
2. Nine silk handkerchiefs. Two white, four grey (or black), one light red, and two dark red.
3. A piece of soft cardboard, seven by five and one half inches, gummed along one of its shorter edges.
4. A glass tumbler, preferably with a foot.
5. The magic wand.

The tube is prepared as follows: The cup is pushed, mouth foremost, as far as it will go, towards one end of it. The space underneath the cup is loaded with, first the dark red handkerchief, next a grey one, and

¹ *Die Zauberwelt*. Vol. iii., p. 118.

then another grey one. The cup is then pushed back again till the lowermost handkerchief comes flush with the end of the tube. The cup itself is left empty.

The second dark red handkerchief and the two other grey ones are tied together, corner to corner, the red one being in the middle. The tying is done with the reef knot, which, as every conjurer knows, is convertible in a moment into a slip-knot, by the simple expedient of pulling one of the two joined ends into a straight line with the handkerchief of which it forms a portion. The three handkerchiefs thus connected are laid one upon another, and the corners turned in and in till a compact little parcel is the result. This, secured by a rubber band, is tucked under the left side of the performer's vest. The loaded tube is concealed under his left arm, outside the coat.

The remaining articles, viz., two white and one light red handkerchief, the piece of cardboard, the tumbler, and the wand, are placed on the performer's table, behind which he takes up his position, and, carelessly showing his hands empty, begins his oration as follows:

"When I last visited London I was staying with a friend in the suburbs, and to get into the City of a morning I had to travel for over half an hour. My friend, who used to start for his business at an earlier hour than I did, looked at me when I came into his counting-house somewhat later, wondering what had happened to me. He told me that I really must not sit down to dinner until I had put on cleaner linen. I was a little offended, for I always put on a clean shirt every day, but on examining my garments more closely I came to the conclusion that my friend was quite right. At first, I laid the blame on the continued London fog

and the soot which is always falling there in such large quantities, but the next morning the matter was fully explained. I travelled, on that day, with another friend who was also paying a visit to my host, by the Underground Railway from High Barnet to the City, and was struck with admiration at the whiteness of his linen, which really almost dazzled me. But when we got out at Moorgate Street Station, and looked at each other, we at once decided that the underground journey was responsible for our altered appearance, and that it was the pervading smokiness that had robbed our linen of its whiteness. From that day forward we never travelled that way without turning up our coat collars.

“ ‘There is a chance for you,’ remarked my friend, for whose amusement I had the evening before been showing a few feats of magic in the family circle. ‘That would be a really good trick, to conjure your linen white again!’ My powers did not go quite so far as that, but I thought the matter over, and prepared for our next social evening a little experiment, wherein I illustrated the effects of a journey through a tunnel. With your permission, I will repeat the experiment in your presence, that you may see for yourselves the very serious consequences of such a journey.

“As unfortunately I cannot have the pleasure of making the journey with you personally, I will endeavour to represent it, as closely as I can. I have here, as you see, a simple piece of cardboard, quite unprepared, save that it has a streak of gum along one of its edges.”

Here the performer takes the piece of cardboard in his left hand. With the right hand he picks up the

wand from the table, and draws it with an air of mystery across each side of the cardboard, then tucks it under his left arm, under cover of these manipulations getting into the right hand, and palming, the loaded tube. In the act of forming the cardboard into a cylinder he rolls up the tube inside it, not so tightly, however, as to prevent the tube moving freely from end to end therein. He then moistens with his tongue the gummed edge of the cardboard, and presses it down afterwards, holding the cylinder supported between his fingers at each end.

"Before your own eyes I have made this piece of cardboard into a tube, which is intended to represent the tunnel. We have n't a railway train handy, so we must make the journey in another way, and as the tunnel I have made is too small to admit my friends and myself in bodily shape, you will not mind if I send our pocket-handkerchiefs through instead to represent us. With your permission, I will be the first to enter the tunnel."

During this harangue he makes sure that that end of the metal tube into which the handkerchiefs were loaded is pointing downwards, and is flush with the lower end of the paper cylinder. Holding them together with a steady grip, he takes one of the white handkerchiefs, and with the aid of his wand introduces it into the upper end of the cylinder, pushing it down so far that it is worked completely into the cup *c*. Under the continued pressure the cup is forced farther and farther down the tube, and in due time the first of the two grey handkerchiefs appears at the lower end of the paper cylinder, and is drawn out altogether by the performer.

"The journey has been but a short one, and soon over, but even so short a journey has sufficed, you see, to spoil the pure whiteness of the handkerchief. Now, my friend, who always wears a white shirt, sets out on his journey" (here he pushes the second white handkerchief in at the top of the cylinder, and produces the second grey one from the bottom), "and reappears at the other end of the tunnel, of quite a different colour. And here comes my other friend, who being our host, and a very polite man, has allowed us to precede him. He is very bashful, you must know; my few words of compliment have brought blushes into his cheeks; in fact he has turned quite red. But he starts on his journey" (he loads in the light red handkerchief at top and draws out the dark red at bottom), "and as you see, his naturally rosy complexion is sadly darkened when he has completed it."

The performer hereupon hands the handkerchief last produced to one of the spectators, after which he allows the metal tube (in which are now the two white and the light red handkerchiefs) to slide out of the cylinder into his right hand, and thence drops it, as opportunity serves, into a *profonde* or upon a *servante*. The paper cylinder he lays upon the table, in such manner that the spectators can see through it. He then spreads the two grey handkerchiefs one upon the other, and taking back the red handkerchief from the holder, lays it upon these, and folds all three together into a little roll, round which he places an india-rubber ring. While exhibiting this in the right hand, he gets from under the vest into the left hand the corresponding little packet. It is an easy matter to substitute the one for the other, after which he gets rid of the roll

last made (the three separate handkerchiefs) into a pocket or into the opening of his vest, dropping the other openly into the glass on the table.¹ This he then hands to one of the spectators, and continues:

“After each of us had transacted his business in the City, we usually started together towards evening on the return journey, and to enable you to judge how very close was the bond of friendship between us, I have placed the handkerchiefs which represent us in this glass, which we will imagine to be a saloon carriage on the Underground Railway. By this time their journey is over. The train has reached High Barnet Station, and I will ask you, sir” (the holder of the glass), “to lend them a helping hand in getting out of the carriage. Will you have the kindness to take the handkerchiefs out of the glass, to take off the rubber band, and spread them out?”

He takes back the glass, and afterwards the three joined handkerchiefs, shows them at full length, and proceeds: “You seldom find so firm a friendship as this, a friendship which no earthly power can destroy. I alone, as one of the brotherhood, have the power to dissolve the bond that unites us, without, however, disturbing our friendship. A word from me will suffice to convince the friends that to flaunt their attachment in this way before so many spectators is scarcely becoming, and you will see, ladies and gentlemen, that they have a due regard for propriety. We will put the

¹ The following will be found an easy way of making the change. Transfer the roll held in the right hand to the left, and thence drop it (in reality the duplicates) into the glass. Pick up the glass with the left hand, and transfer it to the right, after which, all eyes being drawn to this, you will have ample opportunity to get rid of the concealed roll into the *profonde*.

handkerchiefs into the glass once more, and, when we now take them out again, you will find that they are all separate!"

Which is on examination found to be the case. As the reader has doubtless anticipated, the performer has in the course of his patter, and while handling the handkerchiefs, in nautical phrase, "unshipped" the knots, in other words, he has pulled one end of each knot into a straight line with the handkerchief to which it belongs. The knot now becomes a slip-knot, and may be pushed off with finger and thumb in the act of putting the handkerchief into the glass.

Section IV.

METHODS OF "VANISHING" A HANDKERCHIEF.

Many of the appliances already described for the production of a handkerchief are equally available, as will readily be seen, for "vanishing" also. But there are other methods and appliances specially adapted for the latter purpose, and a few of these I proceed to describe.

THE RUBBER RING.

This is an extremely pretty and ingenious method of vanishing a handkerchief, and, seen for the first time, will puzzle even an expert.

The performer folds the handkerchief into the smallest possible dimensions. To keep it from unfolding, he encircles it with an ordinary red rubber ring, which he takes from his vest pocket. Baring his arms to the elbow, he takes the little packet between his hands. "Presto!" It is gone. Again he brings the hands

together, and the little parcel reappears. It is at once handed to one of the spectators, but the closest examination does not reveal anything to account for its faculty of dematerialization.

The secret lies in the fact that through the rubber ring a bit of flesh-coloured silk thread, about three inches in length, has been passed, and the ends joined. It is an easy matter, under cover of settling the handkerchief comfortably within the ring, to pass the fore-finger of one or the other hand through the loop thus formed. The sleeves are then pulled up and the hands brought together. A slight upward movement tilts the little parcel to the back of the hand. When the performer desires it to reappear, he has only to tilt it to the front of the hand again. He then passes the thumb inside the loop, breaks the thread, and lets it fall to the ground, after which the parcel will, of course, stand any amount of examination.

If the performer possesses a reasonable amount of address, he will be able to show both back and front of the hands "all clear" two or three times before the re-appearance of the handkerchief, the little parcel being each time transferred to the side remote from the audience.

A NEW HANDKERCHIEF VANISHER.

This is another of the improvements on the old "hand-box," described in *Modern Magic* (page 263). Like its prototype, it is of tin, but much smaller and lighter. In shape (see Fig. 144) it is a hollow cylinder, one and three quarter inches in diameter by three quarters in depth, with a segment removed from one of

its sides, leaving an opening *a*. The "clip" which formed part of the original hand-box is wanting, but on each face, at the side farthest from the opening, is soldered a portion of a needle bent into a little hook, *b*. The handkerchief to be got rid of is worked into the vanisher in the same manner as was done with the hand-box.

The special merit of this form of the appliance lies in the little hooks, by means of which the vanisher may not only be attached to the hand, but may also be hitched on to the back of a chair, a hanging table-cover, or any portion of the performer's garments.

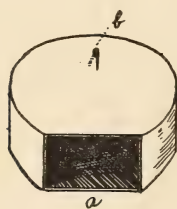


FIG. 144.

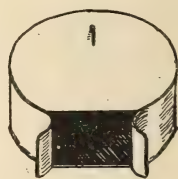


FIG. 145.

The object of having a hook on each side is to avoid the necessity of turning it round before fixing it in any new position.

The ingenious American, Mr. Roterberg, has improved upon the pattern above described in one or two particulars. In the case of his "vanisher," the flat sides project a sixteenth of an inch or so beyond the curved portion, the resulting edge all round giving a capital grip for palming, and the metal on each side of the mouth is continued in an outward curve for three eighths of an inch, as in Fig. 145, forming a sort of lip, for a purpose which will presently appear.

The following is an effective series of "passes." The fake at starting is hooked on the hinder part of the performer's left trouser-leg. A handkerchief is taken, rolled between the hands, vanished (actually palmed in the right), and reproduced from behind the right knee.¹ Meanwhile the left arm is dropped to the side and secures the fake. The hands are now brought together and the handkerchief worked into the box. A feint is made of transferring the handkerchief to the left hand, which is closed, as though containing it. The right hand then draws up the left sleeve, and in so doing hooks the box thereto, just inside the bend of the elbow.

The handkerchief supposed to be in the left hand is next rubbed away, and both hands are shown empty.

The movement of drawing back the sleeves is now repeated, and the fake again palmed in the right hand, with the mouth directed towards the root of the forefinger. The performer now makes a grab at the air, and with the thumb and forefinger works a small portion of the handkerchief into view; then, with a continuous up-and-down movement of the hand, works out the remainder. Just as the whole comes into view, and the hand has reached the lowest point of its movement, the fake is left hooked behind the right trouser-leg, and the handkerchief is brought up alone. After showing that the hands are otherwise empty, the operator begins to roll it between them again, palms it, and produces it from behind the right knee, in so doing regaining possession of the fake.

¹ The sewing of a small block of rubber into one corner of the handkerchief, as described at p. 278, *post*, will be found of material assistance in the performance of this part of the trick.

Once more he works the handkerchief into this, and places it ostensibly in the left hand, really palming it in the right. While apparently rubbing it away to nothing in the left hand, he thrusts the second and third fingers of the right hand into the mouth of the box (the outward curve on each side facilitating this), brings the hands together, and shows the palms of both apparently empty, the fake being supported on the tips of the above-mentioned fingers behind the left hand, as shown in Fig. 146. The fake being again palmed, the backs of the hands can then be shown. Bringing them

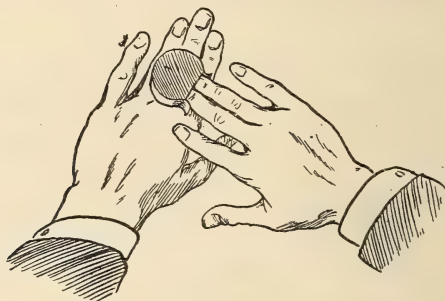


FIG. 146.

together, the handkerchief is again produced, after which it may be thrown over the fake in the hand, and both laid on the table together; or the performer may, if preferred, hook the vanisher under cover of his final manipulations to some part of his clothing, to be got rid of at leisure.

It will be observed that in both forms of the hand-box as above described (see Figs. 144 and 145), the little hook is soldered to the face on the side remote from the opening, and points towards it. I am inclined to

think, after some amount of experiment, that its position would be better reversed; *i. e.*, that it should be placed close to the mouth of the box, but pointing away from it. This is, however, a matter to be decided by the individual performer; as many other passes may be devised, and for some the one, and for some the other, arrangement may be preferable.

ANOTHER METHOD OF USING THE VANISHER.

The following very ingenious mode of vanishing a handkerchief is kindly communicated to me by a gentleman I have more than once had occasion to mention, Mr. C. O. Williams, of Cardiff.

Two pieces of apparatus are used. The one is a hand-box of tin, japanned black, and of the shape already described, but furnished with three hooks, on one side only. These are arranged in a triangle, two near the mouth, the third as in Fig. 144, the points being all turned towards the mouth. The other is a metal thimble, enamelled flesh-colour, one and one quarter inches in length, and of such a size as to fit comfortably over the first joint of the middle finger. In conjunction with this is used a miniature silk handkerchief, three inches square, corresponding in colour and texture with the larger handkerchief used in the trick.

The performer comes forward, showing the handkerchief in his left hand. Behind it are concealed the thimble and the miniature handkerchief.

In the right hand is palmed, hooks outward, the hand-box. Bringing the hands together, the performer works the visible handkerchief into this, at the same time bringing into view, cornerwise between the

forefinger and thumb of the left hand, one half of the miniature handkerchief, which the spectators naturally believe to form a part of the one they have just seen. At this point the performer bethinks himself that he ought to have pulled up his sleeves. He does so, and in the act of pulling up the left sleeve, hooks the hand-box into the under part of the sleeve, where, as soon as the arm drops, it is concealed. He then gradually works the miniature handkerchief out of sight, and into the thimble, which he then places on the middle finger of the right hand, and gently waving the hands about, shows them empty.

The use of the hand-box is of course optional, as the handkerchief may equally well be vanished by some other method. The speciality of the trick is the use of the little bit of silk to induce the belief that the handkerchief is still in the hand, and of the "thimble" to get rid of this. With regard to the latter appliance, I was shown, some years ago, a fake for the same purpose but of a somewhat different pattern, the joint invention, if I remember rightly, of two gentlemen, Messrs. Weston and Carl Posse. The "thimble" in this case likewise fitted the middle finger, and was about one and one half inches long, but it had a slice taken off one side of it; being in fact a mere trough, with one end closed and duly rounded so as to fit the end of the finger, meeting the edge of the nail. From the back of the hand, therefore, the appliance, when in position, was invisible. Attached to the inside of it was a little bit of silk, corresponding to the handkerchief to be vanished. This was normally forced out by the action of a spring, but was concealed when the fake was on the finger.

The method of working was as follows: A handkerchief is shown, rolled up, palmed, and pocketed. Meanwhile, the fake is taken off the finger of the opposite hand, and the little bit of silk shown between the finger and thumb, proving apparently that the handkerchief is still in the hand. The bit of silk is then worked back into the thimble, the thimble placed upon the finger, and both hands shown—empty.

THE "EAU DE COLOGNE BOTTLE" VANISHER.

An ingenious and little-known appliance for getting rid of a handkerchief is a "faked" eau de Cologne bottle, of the familiar Jean Maria de Farina pattern. It will be remembered that the white label on such a bottle completely covers its front and two of its sides. To adapt it for the trick, an oblong piece about two and a half inches by one inch is cut out of the back, the upper end of the opening being about half an inch below the shoulder. A false bottom, which may be of glass, tin, or celluloid, is cemented in just above this point, so that the upper portion of the bottle will still hold a tablespoonful or so of liquid. This is filled with eau de Cologne, and the bottle thus prepared is placed on the performer's table, with the opening turned away from the spectators.

Having produced a handkerchief by some magical means, the performer explains, as he waves it in the air, that this is not a real handkerchief. It is merely materialized for the time being from the silk microbes of which there are always a few millions floating in the air, and unless it is very delicately handled, it will again revert to the original condition. In fact, so

sensitive is it, that a few drops of eau de Cologne will suffice to dematerialize it. "No deception, ladies. This is just ordinary eau de Cologne. If any lady would like a few drops on her handkerchief she is very welcome." Leaving the silk handkerchief on the table he comes forward, bottle in hand, and pours a few drops on any handkerchief that is offered; or, if no one offers, he pours a little on his open left hand; the only object of this being to convince the spectators that the bottle is an ordinary bottle of perfume.

This done, he replaces the cork, and taking up his position at the right side of his table (as viewed by the spectators), puts the bottle on the table and picks up the handkerchief. "Sometimes," he remarks, "I can dematerialize the handkerchief by mere pressure. We will try." So saying, he folds up the handkerchief into as small a compass as possible, finally leaving it in the left hand and appearing to compress it with all his force, but on opening the hand, the handkerchief is seen to be still there. "No," he says, "the influence is n't strong enough. I shall have to use the eau de Cologne." He picks up the bottle with the right hand, thence transferring it for a moment to the left hand (in which the handkerchief still is), so that he may have the right hand free to pull out the cork. This he places on the table, and taking the bottle in the right hand, pours (or makes believe to pour) a few drops of the spirit upon the handkerchief.

He then returns the bottle to the left hand, while the right picks up and replaces the cork. This is the critical part of the trick. In placing the bottle in the hand he gives it a half-turn, thereby bringing the opening towards the fingers, against which the rolled-up

handkerchief is lying, and this movement brings the latter into the cavity. In replacing the cork another half-turn of the bottle is made, again bringing the opening to the rear, and in this condition the bottle is replaced upon the table.

The left hand is kept closed, as though still containing the handkerchief. With his own eyes fixed on the hand, the performer begins to move the fingers, as though rubbing it away. "It is going," he remarks, "going, going, gone!" and opening the hand, shows it empty.¹

A HANDKERCHIEF CHANGED TO A BILLIARD-BALL.

This is both a vanish and a change, for the handkerchief disappears and a billiard-ball takes its place. The ball may be either of wood, celluloid, or enamelled metal. It is hollow, with a hole one and one quarter inches in diameter on one side. This being palmed, the handkerchief is taken into the hand and worked into the cavity of the ball, after the fashion of the familiar "egg." As to the manner of its introduction, however, I may pause to give the reader a "wrinkle" which is by no means universally known, even among professional conjurers.

Most performers take the handkerchief between the hands and work it into the egg (or ball, as the case may be) with the tips of the fingers or thumbs. A far more artistic method is as follows. Holding the egg in the left hand, with the opening outwards, lay the

¹ Readers of *More Magic* may remember that a bottle similarly prepared is used in the trick entitled "Multiplication of Handkerchiefs" (p. 218). In that case, however, the bottle is used for the purpose of production, for which it is equally available.

handkerchief over it, the centre coming just over the hole, then, with the fleshy part of the palm of the right hand, and using a fair amount of pressure, rub the centre of the handkerchief against this opening with a circular movement. This portion of the handkerchief, and ultimately the four corners, will be gradually "screwed" into the opening. The egg is then turned over on to the palm of the right hand, and the trick is done.

The possession of a warm, moist palm greatly facilitates the operation. If the palm is naturally hard and dry, it should be moistened before attempting the experiment.

As closely akin to the method above described I may here mention another ingenious dodge (for the knowledge of which I am indebted to Mr. John Hamley) for facilitating the palming and vanishing of a small silk handkerchief.

In one corner of the handkerchief is sewn a little piece of rubber, cut out of a flat piece about three eighths of an inch thick, and roughly trimmed into a hexagon or octagon, half an inch in diameter. When it is desired to vanish the handkerchief, this corner is placed in the centre of the left palm, and the operator rubs this palm with the other, using the circular movement above described. The effect is to roll up the handkerchief into a solid ball, of which the little piece of rubber forms a sort of core. The ball thus formed is much more easy to palm than one consisting of a handkerchief only. When the ball is formed the performer should keep one of the outer corners snugly tucked in between the first and second fingers. On

reproducing the handkerchief, say from below the knee, he retains hold of this corner and lets the handkerchief unroll itself; which the weight of the rubber causes it to do with special rapidity.

Cork may be substituted for rubber, and will serve the purpose equally well as far as the palming is concerned, but from its greater lightness it does not cause the handkerchief to unroll so quickly.

In default of a prepared handkerchief, the same effect may be produced, to a certain extent, by throwing an ordinary silk handkerchief over the left hand, with one corner hanging down towards the palm. The right hand rapidly rolls this corner into a little ball, and with this as a nucleus, proceeds as above described.

Reverting to the subject of the change of the handkerchief into a billiard-ball, I may further note an ingenious device by which any one of half a dozen differently coloured handkerchiefs may be transformed into a ball of corresponding colour. The secret in this case lies in the use of a clear glass ball, in place of one of opaque material. The selected handkerchief is worked into the ball, which, viewed from a little distance, then assumes the appearance of a ball of that particular colour.

THE NICKEL TUBE FOR VANISHING A HANDKERCHIEF.

The "tube" in this case, unlike those described in connection with the colour-changing tricks, is openly used. It consists of four parts, the tube proper, *a* (see Fig. 147), which is three and one quarter inches in length by one and three eighths inches in diameter; two caps, or covers, *b* and *c*, three quarters of an inch deep, one

fitting over each end, and a cup, one and one half inches deep, fitting easily inside *a*, but having a turned-



over edge, which prevents it passing altogether into the tube, and at the same time facilitates its removal, when desired. This last item is *not* shown to the audience. All four portions are of brass, nickelled and polished. The outside of the little cup is, however, sometimes left dull, and sometimes japanned flesh-colour or a dull black. This part of the apparatus is vested on the performer's right side.

Taking the tube, its two covers, and the handkerchief, the performer hands them for examination to four different persons, seated at some distance apart.

FIG. 147.

While the above items are being inspected, he gets the cup from the vest into the right hand, holding it, bottom upwards, by a slight contraction of the fingers. He now takes back the tube, receiving it in the left hand, but forthwith transferring it to the right, and in so doing bringing it over the inverted cup. Asking now for one of the covers, he places it over the upper end, at the same moment pushing the cup home at the opposite end. Turning the tube the other way up, he takes back the handkerchief, and openly presses this down into the tube (really into the cup). Encircling the upper end of the tube for a moment with his right hand, he grips the lower part with the left, and moves the hands apart, the tube remaining in the left hand. To all appearances he has merely transferred the tube from the one hand to the other, but in reality he has left the cup in the right hand, grasped as before by an

encircling finger, save that it is now mouth uppermost. Asking for the second cover, he receives it with the right hand and places it on the open end of the tube. The presence of the cup, palmed in the right hand, will be found no impediment after a little practice.

A spectator is now invited to hold the tube, professedly containing the handkerchief, and the operator is free to drop the cup, which actually contains it, into a *profonde* or on to a *servante*. The handkerchief (really a duplicate) is reproduced in any way the performer pleases, and the tube, on being opened, is found empty.

THE NICKEL TUBE FOR VANISHING A HANDKERCHIEF— IMPROVED FORM.

The special advantage of this form of the apparatus is that the handkerchief may be seen in the tube up to the very moment that it is placed in the hands of the spectator.

The apparatus in this case (see sectional view in Fig. 148) consists of five separate portions, viz.: two metal tubes of the same length (about two and a half inches), the one, *a*, fitting within the other, *b*, but so loosely that it will drop out by its own weight, and two lids, *c* and *d*, each fitting the tube *b*. These are not "caps," as in the case of the tube last described, but are of the "plug" or "stopper" kind, fitting not over, but into the tube.

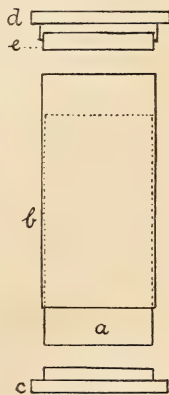


FIG. 148.

The lid *c* is solid, and has no speciality; but *d* is hollow, having room on its under side for a shallow

cup *e*, within which is glued a small piece of crumpled silk, the same material as the handkerchief used in the trick. This little cup fits closely within *d*, and if pressed fully home, cannot be again removed without the aid of a knife and the expenditure of some time and trouble. When it is in place the appearance of *d* is exactly similar to that of *c*, and has nothing whatever of a suspicious character.

To prepare for the trick, the conjurer places the handkerchief he proposes to use, in a carelessly rumpled condition, on his table, preferably raised on a book or cigar-box; and concealed behind it, the inner tube *a*. The outer tube, *b*, as also the two lids *c* and *d*, are likewise on the table. The cup, *e*, with its fragment of handkerchief, is inserted into *d*, but only just so far as to hold them together. In this condition they are readily separable, though to the casual observer they appear as one.

The first step of the performer is to exhibit the tube *b*, which he then replaces on the table (in so doing sliding it gently down over *a*) and picks up in its place the handkerchief. Putting this aside, he exhibits *c* and *d*, which he explains to be the two "ends" of the tube. Into this latter he now packs the handkerchief, and then inserts *d* in the upper end of the tube, taking care, however, not to press it home. While doing this, he holds the tube over the servante, or over a pocket in the table (see page 89), and allows the inner tube *a*, containing the handkerchief, to slip away out of sight. Closing the lower end of the tube with *c*, he steps forward to hand the tube to some gentleman for safe-keeping, but, as if bethinking himself, first shows the company once more that the handkerchief is still in

the tube. This is done by taking off *d* without *e*. The spectators, seeing the small bit of silk, never doubt but that it is the genuine handkerchief. In again closing the tube, the performer presses *d* fully home, so that when it is again opened, *d* and *e* come away together, and the tube is found empty.

THE NICKEL TUBE, WITH PULL.

This is a plain nickel tube, *a* (see Fig. 149), about four inches long by one and one quarter in diameter, with two caps, *bb*, one for each end. To a casual view both ends of the tube are alike, but a minute inspection would show that the edge of one end, which we will call the top, is turned over inwards all round. The edge of the opposite end is left plain.

The above is the whole of the visible apparatus, but there is another item, of which the spectators know nothing. This is a cup, *c*, of such a size at its upper and open end as to pass easily within *a*. Its opposite extremity tapers to a point, to which is attached the end of a pull, so arranged that the cup shall lie till needed just within the left sleeve.

The tube and caps having been handed for examination, separately, to three different persons, the performer takes back the tube, and in turning to his table to get the handkerchief, inserts the cup into its lower end, and pushes it home. The turned-in upper edge prevents it going too far. He then loads one or more

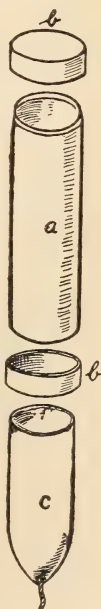


FIG. 149.

handkerchiefs, according to the intended *dénouement* of the trick, into the tube, pressing them in reality into the cup. Taking back one of the caps, he closes the upper end of the tube, and the moment he has done so turns it so as to lie in a straight line with his arm, and works the pull. The cup and handkerchiefs fly up the sleeve. Now taking back the second cap, he closes the other end of the tube, and hands it to some one for safe-keeping, ultimately showing that the handkerchiefs have disappeared, and reproducing them (actually duplicates) elsewhere.

Closely akin to method of "vanishing" above described is

THE VANISH FROM A PAPER CYLINDER.

This, in good hands, is a very pretty and effective vanish. The performer is furnished with an ordinary sleeve-vanisher, as described in *More Magic*, pp. 209, 210. Getting this down into the left hand, and having in the other a small piece of fairly stiff cartridge-paper, he forms this into a cylinder round the vanisher; and then, with the aid of the wand, packs into it a handkerchief (which of course passes into the latter). The moment he relaxes the pressure of the hand on the paper cylinder, the vanisher flies up the sleeve. He blows through the cylinder towards the quarter where the handkerchief is intended to reappear, after which he unrolls the paper and shows it empty.

THE "LAMP-CHIMNEY" VANISH.

This is a more up-to-date version of the "Two Decanters and Flying Handkerchief" trick, described in *More*

Magic (page 216). The main difference is the substitution of a glass lamp-chimney for the decanter, and a simple loop at the end of the pull and passed round the handkerchief for the "hook" there mentioned. The lamp-chimney, with the handkerchief thus attached within it, is held horizontally between the hands of the performer. As both hands are thus fully occupied, the pull must be of the self-acting kind, *i. e.*, with the cord attached to the opposite wrist, and operating by the mere extension of the arms, or by pressure at the armpit, as in the case of the pull described at page 37. Some performers use for this feat the double-action pull, described in *More Magic* in connection with the trick of the "Vanishing Lady,"¹ but for a handkerchief of small size this is not necessary.

A very pretty and effective mode of presenting the trick is to make the handkerchief "vanished" from one glass cylinder reappear between two other handkerchiefs, tied together in a second cylinder.

The requirements for the feat, in addition to the two lamp-chimneys and the pull, are four handkerchiefs of one colour and two of another; say, red and blue respectively. Of these, two red and one blue are tied together by their corners, the blue one between the other two. They are then laid one upon another, and folded into a compact parcel, which may be kept from unfolding by means of a rubber band. This the performer tucks under his vest, towards the centre. The remaining three handkerchiefs are thrown over the back of a chair, in full view. The two lamp-chimneys are placed on a table in the rear. On his own person,

¹ *More Magic*, p. 453.

the performer must be provided with a pull, as before mentioned.

To show the trick, the operator picks up the two visible red handkerchiefs, and ties them together, corner to corner. Spreading them one upon the other on the seat of the chair, he makes them into a parcel as much like the pre-arranged one as possible, folding them, however, less tightly, so that the two packets may be apparently alike in bulk. This parcel he in like manner secures with a rubber band.

Holding this in the right hand, he goes to his table to fetch one of the lamp-glasses; and under cover of the necessary turn gets the parcel of three into the left hand. Making believe to transfer the "two" parcel to this hand, he palms it in the right hand, and shows the "three" instead; then picking up the lamp-glass with the right hand, inserts from the top the parcel thus shown.¹ Again turning to his table for his wand to push it down, he vests the palmed handkerchiefs. The three (supposed by the spectators to be the two) are pushed with the wand to the centre of the lamp-chimney, which is handed to a spectator, with a request that he will hold it horizontally before him.

During the few moments occupied in finding a volunteer assistant and giving him the needful instructions, the conjurer gets the loop of the pull in readiness to receive the blue handkerchief, which, after being shown four-square, is drawn ropewise through the hands, passed within the loop, and then, crumpled up into a ball, is loaded into the second lamp-chimney, which the performer holds in like manner horizontally before him.

¹ The precise method of working the change is of course optional, most performers having their own special fancies in this particular.

Explaining that he proposes to make the handkerchief he holds vanish from the glass and rejoin the two held by the other gentleman, he takes up his position facing the latter, one on each side of the stage, requesting the assistant, at the word "three," to elevate his arms quickly to the level of his face.

The signal is given, "One, two three!" At the last word both raise their arms. The handkerchief held by the performer vanishes, drawn up his sleeve, and on examination of the other two, is found, apparently, to have established itself firmly between them.

A more elaborate version of this capital trick, as worked by Mr. David Devant, will be found in the section devoted to "Miscellaneous Handkerchief Tricks."

TO VANISH FOUR HANDKERCHIEFS SIMULTANEOUSLY.

For the purpose of this trick, in addition to the four handkerchiefs openly used, which should be of distinctive colours, say, red, white, orange, and blue, the performer must be provided with four pieces of similar material and colour, hemmed at the edges, and joined together in the form of a star, as shown in Fig. 150. At the point of intersection should be sewn a ring, about one inch in diameter, of fine gut. The performer must further be provided with a handkerchief vanisher of the kind referred to in *More Magic*, p. 212, disappearing between coat and vest under the compulsion of a piece of elastic.

The four handkerchiefs are at the outset laid on a table, or thrown over the back of a chair. The performer advances, picks up one of them, and shows it four-square. The spectators have no reason to suppose

that his hands are otherwise than empty, but as a matter of fact, the gut ring is passed over the thumb of his right hand, and the "star" handkerchief, neatly rolled together, is concealed in the palm of the hand. This, however, is only a temporary state of affairs, for the moment he extends the first handkerchief (which, so far as the right hand is concerned, he holds between the first and second fingers), the thumb

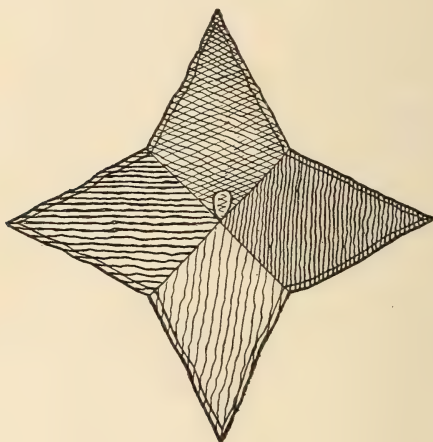


FIG. 150.

is out of sight, and the four rays of the star may be allowed to drop to their full length.

A second handkerchief is taken in the hand and spread out, the first being now allowed to hang by one corner from the right hand, due care being taken that it shall conceal the "star." The third and fourth are shown in like manner, and all four are then allowed to hang down together.

The performer now announces that he will make these four handkerchiefs visibly smaller, and he proceeds

accordingly to roll them up gradually till he gets them into a compact ball, which he then conceals in the palm of the left hand, though to the eye of the spectator the handkerchiefs are still visible in the right hand, being represented by the four hanging ends of the star. (If the hands are kept gently moving up and down during the above process, the sharpest eye will not detect the substitution.)

The right hand closes on these hanging ends, and the performer remarks that the handkerchiefs are already much reduced in size, but they will be smaller yet before he has done with them. While all eyes are thus drawn to the right hand, the left drops to the side, deposits the genuine handkerchiefs in the *profonde*, and gets hold of the vanisher. When the hands are again brought together, the performer, under pretence of rubbing the handkerchiefs still smaller, works the "star" into this, and after a proper interval, shows that they have disappeared altogether. The trick may either end here or be amplified by the reproduction of the four handkerchiefs in some unexpected quarter, say, from an extemporized cylinder of paper, into which, unknown to the spectators, a tube, loaded with four duplicate handkerchiefs, has been inserted in the process of manufacture.

The trick of which the above is a variation is, I believe, the invention of a clever German conjurer, Herr Conradi, of Dresden. In place of the "star" handkerchief, he uses a square handkerchief made up of four smaller squares, and without the gut ring. In these two particulars I think the version above described is the better. Again, he uses, instead of the "vanisher" for the final disappearance, a hollow finger of celluloid,

of such a size that it can be worn till needed on the little finger of the left hand. This idea has much to recommend it, and in many cases I should imagine it would be found extremely useful.

Section V.

METHODS OF REPRODUCING A VANISHED HANDKERCHIEF.

After one fashion or another, we will suppose a handkerchief has disappeared. The next point is to reproduce it in some quarter where it clearly was not a moment or two previously. I shall, however, in the present section, only describe one or two methods of doing this, leaving others to be dealt with in connection with the complete tricks to which they form a *dénouement*.

REPRODUCTION BENEATH A SOUP-PLATE.

This particular form of reproduction was referred to in *More Magic* in connection with a trick of Buatier de Kolta, but the precise mode of introducing the handkerchief under the plate was to some extent left to the imagination of the reader.¹ The method I am about to describe is in one or two particulars an artistic advance upon that then employed by Buatier.

Two plates are in this case used. The handkerchief, duly rolled into a small compass, may either be vested or stuck on a projecting pin-point at the back of a chair. We will suppose that the latter arrangement is adopted; and that the two plates are laid, one upon the other, on the seat of the same chair. The performer, standing on the *right* side of the chair (as viewed by the

¹ "The Dissolving Handkerchief," *More Magic*, p. 214.

spectators) picks up with the left hand the upper plate, and transfers it, right side uppermost, to the right. As he stoops to pick up the plate, however, he rests the right hand for a moment, in a perfectly natural way, on the back of the chair; thumb in front, fingers behind; and as he receives the plate, draws the handkerchief off the pin. The effect is that the handkerchief is clipped between the fingers and the under side of the plate.

He now picks up the second plate, but this he grasps in the reverse way, viz., fingers inside, thumb outside.

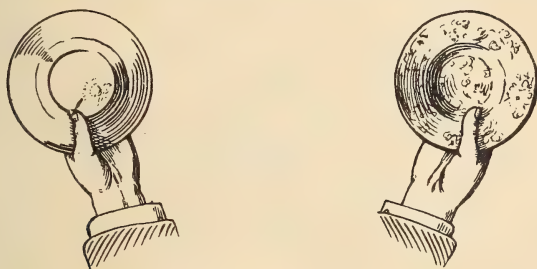


FIG. 151.

He holds up both plates, showing the inside of the one in the right hand, which we will call No. 1, and the outside of the one in the left hand, which we will call No. 2. (See Fig. 151.) He gives each a half-turn, showing the opposite side, and then brings them into a horizontal position, No. 2 (inverted) uppermost, and lowers the one on to the other. Then, making believe to notice some indications of suspicion on the part of the audience, he says, "Oh, no!" or merely smiles and shakes his head, and takes them apart again. This, however, he does by drawing off the uppermost plate (No. 2) with the thumb of the

right hand, and grasping No. 1 with the left (see Fig. 152). This has the effect of leaving the handkerchief between the fingers and the *inside* of plate No. 2, and in again bringing the two plates together, it is an easy matter to deposit the handkerchief between them.

The above description may sound a little complicated; but if followed with the plates in hand it will be found perfectly simple, and the sleight is one well worth acquiring, being the most artistic and effective method with which I am acquainted for attaining its special object. No conjurer who has once mastered it will ever again use a faked plate or other mechanical contrivance for the same purpose.

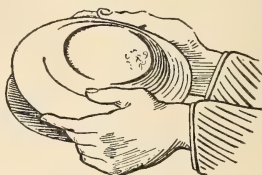


FIG. 152.

Instead of being placed on a pin behind the chair in the first instance, the handkerchief to be produced may be folded small, and kept in that condition by a little band of tissue paper of the same colour, which band is attached, by means of a pellet of adhesive wax, to the edge of the undermost plate. In this case the left hand elevates the first plate and the right hand the second.

REPRODUCTION FROM A SEALED ENVELOPE.

The handkerchief to be produced is rolled up into a small compass, and kept from unfolding by a flat rubber band, not too narrow, on one point of which is fixed a

little dab of adhesive wax. This is vested or placed in a pochette.

An envelope, freely chosen from a packet, is either sealed, or closed by wetting the adhesive flap, as the case may be, and marked in any manner the company may desire. It is then placed in some conspicuous position on the performer's table, say in a notch cut in the top of the cork of a bottle, or resting against a candle in a candlestick. During the journey to the table, however, the performer, by means of the dab of



FIG. 153.

wax, has secretly attached the prepared handkerchief to the hinder side of the envelope.

The performer, taking a similar handkerchief, "vanishes" it by one or other of the methods already referred to, and shows his hands unmistakably empty. Then, advancing to the table, he picks up the envelope, and tears off one end of it. Plunging his fingers into the open end, he brings them out again, and with them the handkerchief, apparently out of the envelope, but really drawn up by the thumb from behind it.

Another method is to pack the handkerchief into a little circular box, of tin, celluloid, or cardboard, with

a lug on either side, as illustrated in Fig. 153 (the dotted lines representing the envelope). The opening, as will be seen, is at the top. In this case, no adhesive is needed, the performer showing all fair, apparently, by passing the envelope from hand to hand, the forefinger and thumb of the hand in use holding the appropriate lug fast against the envelope, and so keeping the little box in position.

TWO VANISHED HANDKERCHIEFS REPRODUCED FROM A
NEST OF THREE ENVELOPES.

This is a somewhat more elaborate form of the same trick. A couple of envelopes are handed for inspection. Each is found to contain a smaller envelope, and this another, smaller still. The spectators to whom they are handed are invited to moisten the adhesive flaps, close them, and replace each smaller one in the next larger; so that the two sets constitute two "nests" of envelopes, all closed. In order to preclude any possibility of substitution, the holders are invited, before parting with them, to mark the outer envelopes in some conspicuous way, the one with a blue pencil, the other with a red one.

This done, the performer places them, with the marks in full view, side by side on a miniature easel, standing on his table. On this is placed beforehand a square of blackened cardboard, its ostensible object being to make the envelopes more conspicuous and prevent their falling through the easel.¹

¹ Two easels are sometimes used, placed on separate tables. Where circumstances permit, this is the more effective arrangement. The working of the trick is the same in either case.

The performer then produces, by any means he pleases, two handkerchiefs, a red and a blue one. He announces that he will pass these separately into the two envelopes, the red handkerchief into the red-marked envelope, and the blue handkerchief into the blue-marked envelope.

The first step is to cause the handkerchiefs to disappear, which again may be done after any fashion the performer pleases. He then takes, say, the envelope with the red mark. He opens it by tearing off one end, and from it produces the second envelope, throwing the first aside. Tearing open the second in like manner, he produces the third, and from this the red handkerchief. He deals in like manner with the second nest of envelopes, and from the innermost produces the blue handkerchief, the handkerchief coming in each case veritably from inside the envelope.

The acute reader will hardly need to be told that the handkerchiefs thus produced are duplicates, but how they came within the envelopes is not quite so obvious. The secret lies in the fact that the envelopes, with the exception of the two outer ones, are duplicates also.

The performer prepares for the trick by placing a red handkerchief in an envelope of the smallest size and enclosing this in one of the next size, which, by the way, should be a full half-inch less in length than the largest envelope.

This is placed just behind the cardboard on one side of the easel, at the back of which there is a little shelf with a deep groove in it to receive it. The blue handkerchief is dealt with in like manner, and the two envelopes containing it are placed behind the easel at the

opposite side. In placing the marked envelopes on the easel, as above described, the performer takes care to place the one with the red mark in front of the pair loaded with the red handkerchief; and the one with the blue mark in front of the pair which contain the blue handkerchief.

In subsequently taking the red-marked nest of envelopes from the easel, he does so with fingers in front and thumb behind, and draws it off sideways, at the same time drawing off behind it the loaded envelope. Holding the marked envelope upright, with the mark towards the spectators to show "no deception," he tears off the upper end, dips his fingers in and draws up, not as the spectators imagine, the envelope enclosed in it, but the loaded one from behind. The keenest eye cannot detect the substitution. The large envelope is now thrown carelessly aside, ostensibly empty, while the performer, stepping forward, opens the remaining two envelopes and produces the handkerchief. The blue handkerchief is then produced in like manner.

Some performers vary the trick by vesting the two loaded envelopes and placing them behind the marked ones during the transit to the easel, which in this case may be used without the black cardboard. This plan has the advantage that the spectators may be invited to choose whether the two handkerchiefs shall appear in the envelopes respectively marked with their own colours, or the reverse. This undoubtedly adds to the effect of the trick.¹

¹ For a very good description of the trick performed in this manner, see the recent work of Mr. H. R. Evans, *Magic and Its Professors*, p. 197.

THE DRUM-HEAD TUBE.

This, one of the most up-to-date and most ingenious appliances for the reproduction of a handkerchief, is of American invention. It consists, ostensibly, merely of a brass tube, polished or nickel-plated, five inches in length by one and a half in diameter (see *a*, Fig. 154), and a couple of flat metal rings, *b*, *c*, fitting easily over

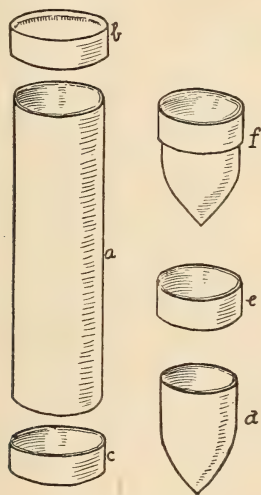


FIG. 154.

it. A book of cigarette-papers, about two inches in width, completes the visible apparatus.

These various items having been submitted, in a casual way, for inspection, the performer hands the empty tube to one of the spectators, who is invited to place one of the cigarette-papers over either end, and to secure it by forcing one of the rings over it. It is then passed to some one else, and the

opposite end is treated in like manner, the tube thus forming a sort of miniature drum, with tissue-paper ends.

The little drum being returned to the performer, he places it in the hands of a third spectator for safe-keeping. Taking a small silk handkerchief, he announces that he is about to pass it into the empty tube. He "vanishes" it by any method that he pleases; then, taking back the little drum, he breaks the paper at one end, and the handkerchief is found inside.

The secret lies in the use, unknown to the spectators, of the little appliance marked *d* in the diagram. This is a metal tube, one end of which is normally open. The opposite end is closed, tapering down to a fairly sharp-pointed cone. This is prepared by packing a duplicate handkerchief into it, after which the open end is closed with another cigarette-paper, which is kept in position by a third ring, *e*, passed over it. The upper edge of *e* curls over slightly to the outside, the appearance of the two in combination being as *f*, and the two together being of such a diameter as to just fit within *a*.

When the newly made "drum" is handed to the performer he has this palmed in his left hand, point outwards. He takes back the drum with the right, and holds it horizontally between the hands while he asks who will volunteer to take charge of it. In that moment he presses the fake into the end of the drum; the conical point forcing its way through the original paper. When it is fully home it leaves the appearance of the drum exactly as before, though it is now loaded with the duplicate handkerchief.

REPRODUCTION FROM A CANDLE.

This is a very pretty form of reproduction, and becomes all the more effective if the performer has professedly "passed" the handkerchief, by means of one or other of the vanishing processes, into the candle in the first instance.

The old-fashioned method of producing this effect was to insert the handkerchief to be produced in a paper tube with a candle-end at top, representing, when placed in a candlestick and lighted, a genuine candle. This was wrapped in paper, and the paper and its contents then torn in half, the handkerchief being extracted from the ruins, and a substitute candle being produced from the tail pocket of the operator.

This sort of thing the high-class performer will let severely alone. A rather better plan, if the wizard has no confidence in the magic of his own fingers, is to have the handkerchief neatly packed into a longitudinal groove in one side of the candle, which is then papered over. A minimum of dexterity will then suffice to draw the handkerchief apparently out of the flame, but there is always the risk that some spectator of an inquiring turn of mind may ask for a nearer view of the mysterious *bougie*, when the wizard will be brought to shame and confusion.

Buatier de Kolta's method of passing a handkerchief into a candle, and reproducing it from thence, is as follows:

On the performer's table is a candle, in a candlestick, but unlighted. Beside it is an ordinary match-box, a little way open. Into the cavity thus left at one end a handkerchief is neatly packed. In the right sleeve

of the performer rests a "vanisher" attached to a pull, led to the opposite wrist, as described in *More Magic*.¹

Thus provided, the performer shows a duplicate handkerchief, rolls it up in the right hand, and transfers it, with a make-believe appearance of awkwardness, to the left. He then places the right hand behind him, and (by flexing the right arm a little) allows the vanisher to sink down into it. The spectators naturally believe that the handkerchief is still in the right hand. Appearing suddenly to realize this, the performer slowly opens the left hand, and shows that they are mistaken, for the handkerchief is there. He then transfers it to the right hand, and holding this over the candle, with its back to the spectators, works the handkerchief into the vanisher, which he then draws up the sleeve, the hand being left empty and the handkerchief having ostensibly passed into the candle. The performer explains that it is much more difficult to get it out again, but he will endeavour to do so. First, however, he must light the candle. This he does, and closes the match-box, the act of doing so pushing the concealed handkerchief into his left hand. He nips the flame with the thumb and second finger of the opposite hand, as if pulling something out of it, then rubs the hands together, and the handkerchief is seen to have returned. The latter part of the trick may of course be performed with bare arms.

A somewhat more elaborate method is as follows: The vanisher is dispensed with, and one handkerchief only is used. The candle and match-box are disposed as in Buatier's version, save that the latter, though

¹ Pp. 209-210.

pushed slightly open, contains no handkerchief. The only new item of apparatus is a ring of very thin wire, about an inch and three quarters in circumference. This at the outset, pulled into an oval shape, is concealed between the fingers of the performer's right hand. Showing the handkerchief in the same hand, he proceeds to fold it as small as possible, secretly introducing it into one end of the wire loop. He then gives this a double twist at the centre, transforming it into a figure of 8, the handkerchief being held fast in one of the two loops thus formed. The unoccupied loop he slips over the thumb of the right hand. He now makes believe to transfer the little parcel to the left hand, really throwing it over the back of the right hand. He then makes a rubbing movement over the candle with the left hand, and shows both hands empty, the handkerchief having ostensibly passed into the candle. This he now proceeds to light, taking a match from the box for that purpose. Meanwhile he has got the little parcel over to the front of the right hand, and pushes it into the hollow end of the match-box, the loop projecting. He is now able, in a casual way, to show the hands both back and front, unmistakably empty.

His first attempt at lighting the candle is a failure, for he accidentally (?) drops the match. This necessitates his picking up the box again to take another. In so doing he slips the thumb through the wire loop, and regains possession of the handkerchief. After lighting the candle, he passes the hand over the flame, and a moment later shows the recovered handkerchief, first breaking the wire, and so enabling it to expand to its normal dimensions.

THE GLASS BOX, FOR REPRODUCING A HANDKERCHIEF.

This is a box, cubical in shape, and measuring about four and a half inches each way. The sides are of clear glass, set in a metal framework, which may be either enamelled black or nickel-plated, the latter of course being the more elegant in appearance. The box is supported on four metal feet.

In principle it is the same as the familiar card-box. To the hinder edge of the bottom of the box, inside, is hinged a glass flap, which normally lies against the back of the box, being kept in that position by the pressure of a spring. It may, however, be folded down upon the bottom, and kept in that position by means of a spring catch. This catch can be withdrawn at the pleasure of the performer, either by giving a half-turn to one of the feet or by pushing aside a little projecting tongue, according to the construction of the particular box.

The box is prepared for use by placing one or more handkerchiefs in it, not folded, but put in anyhow. The movable flap is then folded down over them and secured by the spring catch. In this condition the box may be freely shown, if only the performer takes care to hold it horizontally, and does not allow the spectators to get a view of the bottom, either from within or without. A good plan is to hold it flat on the hand in front of a lighted candle, when the fact of the flame being visible through the transparent sides seems to afford conclusive proof that it is really empty.

Duplicates of the concealed handkerchiefs are then "vanished" by any of the means already described. Taking the box in one hand and a lady's fan in the

other, the performer fans the box, and under cover of so doing releases the catch.

The flap flies up, and the handkerchiefs instantly expand, nearly or quite filling the box. These are removed and the box again held in front of the candle, the light being shown through both sides and bottom, and proving conclusively (?) that there is "no deception" about it.

Section VI.

MISCELLANEOUS HANDKERCHIEF TRICKS.

The reader who has fully mastered the instructions given in the earlier sections of this chapter should have little to learn as to the manipulation of handkerchiefs.

There is, however, still unlimited scope for inventive genius as to the most telling use of the forces at his command and the introduction of such incidents as may enhance their effect. One or two examples of such combination may therefore be acceptable, and I cannot better begin than with an illusion which, in the hands of the inventor, has delighted many thousands of spectators, and which has formed the basis of a score of more or less perfect imitations, some of which have been already discussed in the course of this chapter.

DEVANT'S HANDKERCHIEF TRICK.¹

This is a trick of three distinct stages; consisting of, first, the production of three white handkerchiefs in

¹ See remarks on p. 241. The present is the first occasion on which a really correct explanation of this trick appears in print. The description has been revised by Mr. David Devant himself, and is published by his express permission.

succession; next, changing their colour to red, green, and yellow respectively, and lastly, after knotting two of them together and placing them in a glass lamp-chimney, causing the third to vanish from a second lamp-chimney and be found securely tied between the two others.

The requirements for the first two stages of the trick are as under:

1. Three white handkerchiefs of finest French sarsnet, each fifteen inches square. Of these, one is packed into a false finger, which is placed, opening upwards, just within the opening of the performer's vest on the left side. The second is packed into the end of a half-open match-box, on his table, and the third, folded small, is bestowed inside the bend of his left elbow.

2. A brass tube, four inches in length by one and one half in diameter, slightly flattened, that it may not roll off when laid upon the table. This tube is loaded with three handkerchiefs, of the same size as the white ones. Each has a violet border about an inch wide, but the colours of the centre portions vary; the one first inserted being red, the second yellow, and the third green.

3. A piece of stiff drawing-paper, ten and one half inches by eight, prepared as follows: One end is folded down to a depth of two and one half inches. The handkerchief tube is then laid on the folded portion, and the paper rolled tightly round it, so that when the tube is removed, it shall still retain a certain amount of curvature.

In arranging for the performance of the trick, the paper is laid on the table as shown in Fig. 155, the

folded end (now opened out again) being farthest away from the spectators, and concealing the loaded tube, which lies just behind it. The end of the tube with the *red* handkerchief lies towards the performer, as he stands to work the trick, which he does throughout *with the table on his left hand*.

4. Vest servante, in position ready for use.¹

The performer begins by announcing that he wants a white silk handkerchief. In order to produce one, he must warm his hands. He accordingly takes a match from the box, strikes it, lays the box down again, and with the lighted match makes believe to warm first



FIG. 155.

the one palm, and then the other, thereby calling attention, indirectly, to the fact that his hands are empty. He then draws back, first the right sleeve, then the left, and in so doing gets the handkerchief from the bend of the arm into the right hand. He brings the palms of the hands together, and produces the handkerchief from between them, the silk expanding spontaneously as the pressure is removed.

Exhibiting it, and laying it down on the table, he remarks, cheerfully: "I always make my white handkerchiefs like this. First I show you that my hands are empty. I bring them together." (He does so, palm to palm.) "Nothing could be more simple. Watch!

¹ See p. 26.

I will do it again. It's a very simple trick. All you want is a couple of hands and a match, and then you have a strike."

He strikes a match, and in closing the box squeezes out the concealed handkerchief into his right hand. He makes believe to warm the hands, as before, then brings them together. "You have heard of hands working together better after a strike, have n't you? You just warm them up, and almost immediately you produce the manufactured article." He rubs the hands together, and produces the second handkerchief.

"I would like some one to see that these are really handkerchiefs. Will some of those ladies be good enough to examine this? It's a nice piece of silk, is n't it? A rich sort of silk, the sort you get for four three a yard, you know. In case any one did not see how that was done, I will do it again, very slowly. I bring my empty hands slowly together, and almost immediately I get what I want." (Produces third handkerchief.) "I think this plan is rather better than buying these little things. It comes cheaper."

A word of explanation will here be desirable. So soon as the second handkerchief is produced the performer nips both by one corner between the first and second fingers of the left hand. One of these he then hands for examination as above. When it is returned, he replaces it hanging down from the left hand as before, and under cover of the two handkerchiefs reaches into the vest and gets possession of the false finger. This is inserted between the second and third fingers of the right hand and the hands brought palm to palm, under which conditions the presence of the finger cannot possibly be detected. A moment later this is bent

down between the palms and the third handkerchief produced. Under cover of its production, the then empty finger is dropped into the vest servante.

After a little "patter" as to the colour of the three handkerchiefs, which, he says, may be variously regarded as "art white," "subdued white," or "dirty white," according to the taste of the beholder, the performer, holding all three still in his left hand, with the right picks up the piece of paper, ostensibly to make room for them on the table, whereon he lays them accordingly.¹ In taking up the sheet of paper, he picks up with it the loaded tube, which adapts itself to the

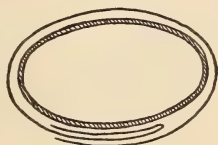


FIG. 156.

concave side of the folded-down portion. The paper and tube are held vertically between the forefinger and thumb. He bends the free portion of the paper backwards and forwards, showing that there is nothing concealed behind it, and then rolls it into a cylinder, the portion previously folded naturally folding itself down as before against the tube. (Fig. 156 gives a sectional end view of the paper and tube, save that the paper would in reality be wound a good deal closer.) The

¹ It should be mentioned that the table used by Mr. Devant in this trick is a small portable affair, the top, which is oblong, measuring about sixteen inches by ten only. This limitation of space facilitates the working of the trick, the picking up of one article to make room for another affording just the opportunity needed for some of the essential movements.

paper and tube, still held upright, are now transferred to the left hand; the little finger lying across the lower end.

With the right hand the performer picks up one of the handkerchiefs, and again inserts its uppermost corner between the first and second fingers of the left hand. A second is dealt with in the same way. Thus held, the two handkerchiefs screen the lower end of the paper cylinder, and the brass tube is now allowed, resting on the little finger, to drop a couple of inches below the bottom of the cylinder. The patter meanwhile has been continued as follows:

"With this paper I make a tube. There is nothing inside. It is simply a piece of paper rolled up. Every item I use is quite unprepared. Nothing in the tube, and nothing concealed in either of these three white handkerchiefs. Oh, yes!" (as he picks up the third handkerchief), "I see, there is a tiny little hole concealed in this one—but I expect that was born there."

With the right hand he throws the third handkerchief up in the air, a few inches only, and catches it again, crumpled together. He then brings it close to the lower ends of the other two handkerchiefs, and raises all three together till they meet the bottom of the tube. This latter is then allowed to drop into the right hand, which, however, is instantly turned over, the handkerchiefs likewise falling over, and so masking the tube. The paper cylinder is, of course, now empty, and the spectators are allowed to see clearly that it is so. He continues: "I got the idea of this trick through travelling on the Metropolitan Railway. I always travel on that line when I can, because I am fond of scenery. Now I am simply going to pass these white

handkerchiefs slowly through this cardboard tube." He inserts them at the bottom, in so doing again inserting the brass tube and gradually pushing the white handkerchiefs into this, thereby forcing out the others.

"It seems a curious thing, but for a long time past I have been living by conjuring, and now I am going to dye by it. Simply passing the handkerchiefs through this tube will have the effect of changing them into the very latest shades." (He begins to draw out the coloured handkerchiefs at top.) "You can see here three art shades—Regent Street art. Here is a nice quiet colour called 'autumn green.' This again is rather a sweet tint, 'faded ginger.' This last is exquisite; it is the prettiest pink known—to drapers; and is called 'the maiden's blush.' Here are the three handkerchiefs, and here is the little piece of cartridge paper."

During the production of the handkerchiefs the paper cylinder is held upright in the left hand. As each handkerchief is extracted by the right hand at the top, it is returned to the left hand and allowed to hang down by one corner from between the fingers. The handkerchiefs thus hanging mask the bottom of the paper cylinder, and just as the third handkerchief is exhibited the left hand is drawn back as far as the opening of the vest, and lets the brass tube (which now contains the three white handkerchiefs) slip down into the servante.¹

The performer drops the three handkerchiefs from the height of a foot or so down on his table, thereby proving indirectly that there is no tube concealed in them. The red one is left uppermost, in readiness for the next phase of the trick. The performer then

¹ The reader may be interested to know that the vest servante was devised by Mr. Devant for the purpose of this particular trick.

retires for a moment or two behind the scenes, remarking: "I make a practice of retiring for a little while after each trick, to give people an opportunity of telling each other how it's done. It makes the trick more interesting."

For the concluding stage of the trick a little further preparation is necessary. Three handkerchiefs, corresponding in appearance with the three last produced, are tied corner to corner, the red one being in the middle. This latter is folded in half diagonally on the yellow one, which is rolled round it. The two, twisted ropewise, are then wound tightly round the forefinger, and the green handkerchief round these, the final end being tucked into a fold. In this condition they form a compact little ball, which lies till needed behind the scenes.

On the performer's person is a "pull," after the kind originated by Robert-Houdin (who, however, did not fully realize its possibilities), and used at a later date with such good effect by Buatier de Kolta. Mr. David Devant, however, has "gone better" than his predecessors, the very slight movement of the arms required to actuate his pull having fairly puzzled his brother wizards, and having set them to devising elaborate mechanical contrivances to get the same effect, which, however, he obtains in a ridiculously simple way. His improvement practically consists in shortening the pull, and attaching the fixed end of the cord to the upper arm, instead of to the wrist.

The exact specification of Mr. Devant's appliance is as follows: A leather strap, of the garter kind, is buckled round the left arm, just above the elbow. On

this runs a brass ring, to which is attached a piece of stout whipcord, two feet six inches long. At the free end of this is a loop of much finer cord, six inches in length. These are "whipped" the one to the other, so that there may be no knots to impede the perfect working of the pull.

The cord travels from the left arm across the back (outside the vest), and down the right sleeve. In order to keep the loop instantly available till wanted, and at the same time to leave his arms perfectly free, Mr. Devant uses another ingenious little device, to the best of my belief peculiar to himself, viz., he simply passes a spare handkerchief midway through the loop and allows it to be drawn up the sleeve. The military plan of carrying the handkerchief in this way has now become so common, even among civilians, that it excites no remark, and the performer has only to draw the handkerchief out of his sleeve (simultaneously passing the loop over the thumb), wipe his face with it, and place it in his pocket, to have the pull ready for action.

To show the trick, the performer comes forward with the loop over his right thumb. Palmed in the same hand, he has the little bundle of three handkerchiefs, arranged as above. In the left hand he brings in the two lamp-chimneys.

After exhibiting the two last-named articles, he makes room for them on the table by picking up, with the right hand, the three handkerchiefs already used, thereby masking the little package concealed in the hand. He then transfers the yellow and green handkerchiefs to the left hand, and lays the red one down again, with the little bundle behind it. He next ties

the yellow and green handkerchiefs together, corner to corner, twists them ropewise, and rolls them into a ball, the green one outermost.

The patter up to this point is to the following effect: "For my next experiment I use these same handkerchiefs and these two glass tubes. You can see through them. I hope you won't be able to see through me. I take two of these handkerchiefs and tie them together. I tie them by the corners, so. I think that you will be inclined to admit that these are fairly tied. I do not like to trouble you to examine these things because there is no entertainment in examining them—especially when there's nothing to find out. I am going to roll up these handkerchiefs in a small bundle. I will do it slowly. I do everything slowly; I do hate to deceive people. Observe, my whole apparatus consists of this little bundle" (he shows it between finger and thumb of left hand), "this red handkerchief, and these two glass tubes."

With the right hand he picks up the red handkerchief, with the bundle of three behind it, and then (on the tacit pretext of needing the left hand to handle the lamp-chimneys) transfers the bundle of two to the same hand, just below the bundle of three. The hand is now tilted over slightly, so that this latter bundle (ostensibly the same) comes into view. With the left hand he moves the glass tubes a little farther from one another, and while the general attention is thus attracted in that direction, drops the bundle of two handkerchiefs from the right hand into the vest servant. "I put these two handkerchiefs" (the bundle of three) "into one of the glass tubes, so that they are isolated from everything. Perhaps some gentleman will

hold the tube between his hands, so that I can't possibly get at them. High up, sir, above your head.

"Now for the swindle—problem, I mean. The red handkerchief I propose to put in this other tube. See that I do it fairly. I want you to see that I really put it into the glass. You see I put it as nearly as possible in the centre of the tube, so that it is out of reach of my fingers. But I am not going even to put my fingers near it. I am going to hold it between the palms of my hands, so." (He holds the glass horizontally between the palms.) "In this position, you see, the only way the handkerchief can be got at is by breaking the glass. And yet, when I say, 'Go,' it will vanish from the cylinder. Look! Is n't it exciting? Watch carefully, it is just off. Going! Going! Go!"

It is hardly necessary to inform the reader that before pushing the handkerchief into the glass cylinder it was first passed through the loop of the pull. When the performer says "Going! Going! Go!" he at each word raises the cylinder shoulder high and lowers it again.

Up to the critical moment the elbows are kept close to the sides, but at the word "Go!" they are lifted outwards for a moment. The movement is so slight as to be practically imperceptible, but the handkerchief disappears like a flash.

"It is very simple. All you want is a tube made of precipitated glass. I often hear people say 'It disappears up his sleeve.' I hope that you won't believe that it disappears up *my* sleeve. I will show you my sleeve."

He unfastens the cuff, and draws up the sleeve, showing

the bare arm. "There 's no arm—harm, I mean—in showing you there is nothing up my sleeve, except this. This is solid—I know it 's solid—I have had it a long time. I have another in the other sleeve, I have had just as long. In fact, they were a sort of birthday present. I always carry them with me; I have got used to them.

"Now I will show you that the handkerchief has really arrived at the other tube, and that forms the answer to the problem. If I have succeeded, we shall find that it has not only gone to the other tube, but has tied itself between the two others." Which is, on examination, found to be the case.

I have dealt with this trick at somewhat disproportionate length, in order to give, to the best of my ability, an exact idea of its actual working. As will be seen, the "patter" is of the simplest kind; but this, slight though it is, is arranged with excellent judgment to make the needful opportunities for the various movements of the trick. I can imagine few better lessons, even for an advanced student of conjuring, than, after having mastered this description and got a clear idea of the successive processes, to go and see the trick worked by Mr. Devant, and notice how skilfully a series of perfectly natural movements are made to cover the necessary manipulations of the conjurer. The most striking testimony to the excellence of the trick is this, that the illusion is still complete, even though the spectator may know, theoretically, how it is effected.

The "lamp-chimney" vanish, in one form or another, has practically superseded Buatier de Kolta's trick of

passing a handkerchief from one decanter into another. The fact that the second decanter was *covered* was a weak point, which is avoided in the more modern version.

THE HAT AND HANDKERCHIEF.

This neat little trick is the invention of a wizard hight Francis King, a German, I believe, though performing under an English name.

The requirements are as follows:

1. A couple of small cylindrical tumblers (such as

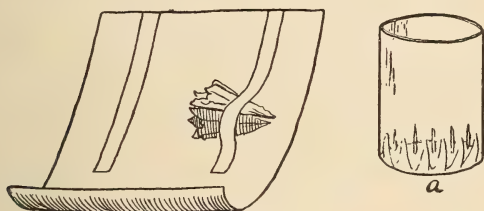


FIG. 157.

are used to cover bedroom water carafes). (See *a*, Fig. 157.)

2. Four small handkerchiefs, two red and two blue, and two miniature handkerchiefs, say three inches square, one of each colour. These should be sewn together, corner to corner, for greater convenience in handling.

3. A chair with a small bag servante behind it.

4. A piece of white paper, eight inches by seven; not too stiff, but strengthened on one side by the addition of two strips of stouter paper. These are pasted across the width of the larger paper, at equal distances

from its two ends, and just so far apart that the distance between their outer edges shall correspond with the height of the glass tumblers. One of these two strips is pasted down throughout its length; the other only at the ends, the space between forming a band under which are tucked the two miniature handkerchiefs, as shown in the diagram. The paper, thus prepared, is rolled up, with the strips inside, and kept in that condition till it acquires a slight inward curve, enabling the performer to lay it, without fear of its falling, over the back of the chair behind which is the servante. Two of the larger handkerchiefs, one of each colour, are tucked loosely into one of the glasses and placed on the seat of the same chair. The second glass, containing the other two, is vested, lying horizontally with its opening to the right hand.

To show the trick, the performer borrows a soft felt hat, and in turning to the chair, introduces the vested glass into the hat,¹ which he places thereon, at the same time picking up the visible glass and handkerchiefs. Taking out and showing the handkerchiefs, he again packs them into the glass. Next, with the same hand with which he holds the glass, he picks up the sheet of

¹ This may be conveniently managed as follows: In receiving the hat (with the right hand) from the lender, grasp it by the brim with fingers inside, thumb outside. In moving towards the chair, hold it in front of you, crown downwards; thrust the thumb into mouth of glass, and draw this down till it rests on the outside of the hat, kept in position by the thumb. The hat may now be transferred to the opposite hand (the glass being secured by the *left* thumb, in this case outside the glass). Both hands having been thus proved apparently empty, the hat is returned to the right hand, and the thumb takes up its original position inside the glass. In the act of turning the hat over the thumb loads the glass into it, the keenest eye being unable to detect the movement.

paper and makes believe to wrap the glass in it. In reality, however, he lets the glass drop into the bag of the servante, and the paper when rolled up is empty, though, if it is carefully handled, the strips of paper on its inner side make it appear exactly as if it really contained the glass.

The next step is to close one end of the cylinder thus made, the paper being turned down just at the edge of the stiffening strip. The other end of the cylinder is then closed, but the performer, as if bethinking himself, first draws out and exhibits a portion of the two miniature handkerchiefs, proving apparently that the handkerchiefs (and inferentially the glass) are still within the cylinder. This is then pushed back by the aid of the wand and the end closed. After a little appropriate patter, the performer crushes the paper into a shapeless mass, throws it aside, and produces the missing tumbler and handkerchiefs from the hat upon the chair.

THE CLOSED GLASS TUBE (*L'ÉTUI EN CRISTAL*).

This very neat illusion (which I believe originated with Professor De Vere, before mentioned) resembles that last described, in so far that in each a hat and a handkerchief play prominent parts, but they have nothing else in common.

The effect of the trick is that a handkerchief, borrowed or otherwise, is placed in a short glass tube, closed at one end after the manner of a test tube. (See *a* in Fig. 158). The opposite end is closed by a metal cap, *b*. The handkerchief thus safeguarded is placed in a borrowed hat.

After a due amount of "patter," the tube on being taken out of the hat is found to be empty, and the missing handkerchief is presently reproduced in some other quarter.

As a matter of fact there are *two* tubes, exactly alike; each with its own cover. In the left sleeve of the performer is a pull, terminating in a metal cup, *c*, of such a shape and size as to just fit over the rounded end of the tube. The pull is of the elastic kind, and so arranged in point of length that the cup shall lie, when the arm is extended, just above the shirt-cuff. By bending the arm, it may be brought into the hand.

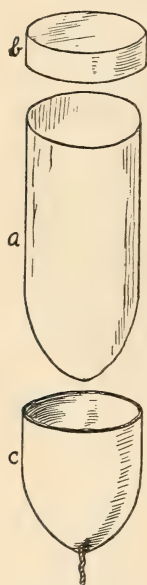


FIG. 158.

To prepare for the trick, one of the tubes, with the cover on, but empty, is placed under the right side of the performer's vest. His first step is to borrow a hat, which he receives in the left hand. As he bends forward to take it, he gets the tube from under the vest into the right hand, to which the hat is then immediately transferred. The tube is held under the brim, outside, while the hat is carelessly held up and shown empty; after which it is an easy matter to transfer it to the inside. The hat, now containing the empty tube, is placed upon the table.

The next step is to exhibit the second tube and the handkerchief, which some one is invited to place in the tube. It is taken back by the performer with the right hand, but is forthwith transferred to the left, into which the performer has meanwhile got down the cup. This

is slipped over the end of the tube, which the performer then makes believe to place in the hat. In the act of doing so he releases the pull, and the tube is drawn up the sleeve; though to the eye of the spectator, who has seen the hand go into the hat holding the tube, and reappear empty, it appears an absolute certainty that the tube has been left in the hat. In due course the empty tube is exhibited and the handkerchief reproduced as may be desired.

THE HANDKERCHIEF CUT AND RESTORED (MODERN METHOD).

This, so far as the above description goes, is one of the oldest of conjuring tricks; every schoolboy knows that the handkerchief is not cut at all, and that if the performer were to spread it out, it would be seen to be uninjured.

Such *was* the case, no doubt, but as our French friends say, "*Nous avons changé tout cela.*" The conjurer of to-day *does* spread out the handkerchief. It is not changed, but is the genuine borrowed article. In the middle of it is a huge hole, through which may be seen the coat sleeve, or the trouser-leg, over which it is outspread. And yet, "*Presto!*" the damage is repaired and the handkerchief is whole as at first.

The secret lies in the use of a very simple little appliance. Two small pieces of cambric, about five inches square, are lightly tacked together at the edges, forming a sort of little bag. Between them lies a piece of thin black cloth, a shade smaller. This is vested, and at the proper moment got into the right hand, on the palm

of which it lies flat, with the centre of the borrowed handkerchief laid over it. The hand closes on them and turns them over, then transfers them to the left hand. The little cambric bag is now uppermost. The performer draws up a portion of the centre of this, and offers it to the scissors. He then throws the handkerchief loosely over the left coat sleeve, the little bag lying upon it, with the cut side uppermost. The black cloth, visible through the hole just made, appears to be the coat sleeve, seen through the handkerchief. A little gentle friction applied to the hole enables the performer to palm off the little bag and to restore the handkerchief, uninjured, to its anxious owner.

THE "MARVELLOUS METAMORPHOSIS" SILVER CYLINDER.

The object of the ingenious piece of apparatus to which Messrs. Hamley give the above name is the transformation of a silk handkerchief, or handkerchiefs, into a flag.

The visible apparatus for the trick consists (in addition to a miniature Union Jack of silk) of a nickelled tube (see Fig. 159) four and one half inches in length by one and three eighths in diameter, closed by a cap, three quarters of an inch deep, at each end.

With the principal tube is used, unknown to the spectators, an inner tube, *a*, two inches in length, just fitting within it. The end which in use is the upper one has the edge turned over slightly. This serves the double purpose of preventing the tube going too far in and of enabling the performer to palm it out again with ease, when desired. Both ends of the tube are open,

but midway between them is fixed a little bag of black silk, as indicated by the dotted lines.

The bottom of this bag may of course be pushed to either end at pleasure.¹

The tube *a* is prepared for use by loading it, from the lower end, with the flag, which is pressed in as far as the little bag will permit. Thus loaded, it is vested, or otherwise so placed as to be instantly get-at-able.

Thus provided, the performer offers the principal tube for inspection, and when this is given back, the two caps, inviting the holder to make quite sure that there are no false bottoms or other species of deception about them. While attention is thus called to the two caps, he takes the opportunity to slip *a* into one end of the principal tube. He next borrows a lady's handkerchief, which he proceeds to place openly therein. First, however, in order, as he says, to prevent its coming out at the bottom, he places one of the caps on the lower end. The handkerchief, being now inserted at the top and pushed down with the wand, squeezes out the flag into the larger tube, itself remaining tightly packed in the little bag.

The next step is to palm out the inner fake and to close the visible tube with the second cap. The tube is now placed on the table, or handed to a spectator, and

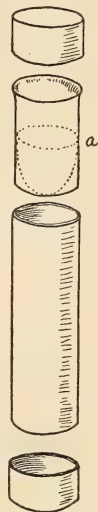


FIG. 159.

¹ This arrangement has already been referred to. (See note on page 244.) The method of fixing the bag is in the present case extremely ingenious. The tube is made in two portions, screwed together, the edges of the bag being nipped between them.

being in due course opened, the lady's handkerchief is found apparently transformed to a pretty flag; the actual handkerchief remaining in the performer's possession, to be afterwards reproduced in any way he pleases.

A HANDKERCHIEF CHANGED TO PAPER RIBBONS.

This makes a very pretty finish to a handkerchief trick. The handkerchief used is rubbed between the hands, from which a stream of paper ribbons, yard upon yard, forthwith begins to flow. When the supply comes to an end the hands are shown empty, the handkerchief having entirely disappeared.

This trick depends on the use of a special piece of apparatus, the different parts of which are depicted in

Fig. 160. Here *a* is a handkerchief vanisher, of special form and construction. It is of thin brass, and in the shape of half an egg, closed at top, but having an opening, *b*, at the side, giving access to the interior. Round the upper edge is a metal band *c*, half an inch deep, designed for the reception of a coil of paper ribbon. Fitting tightly over this is a lid, *d*, to keep the coil in its place, with an opening in the

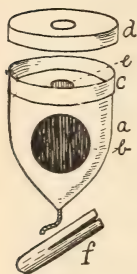


FIG. 160.

centre through which the coil can be drawn out at pleasure. The inner end of the coil is inserted in the notch of a little peg, *f* (which is slit through two thirds of its length like a miniature clothes-peg), and there secured by passing a rubber ring over it. The peg, thus attached, is worked into the centre of the coil, and when the latter is in position, the lower end of the peg projects slightly, through the hole *e*, into the

interior of *a*. This latter is attached by its tapering end to a rubber pull, the exact arrangement of which may be left to the performer's fancy.¹

The working of the trick will need but little explanation. At the appropriate moment the performer gets the vanisher into his hands and works the handkerchief into it. The act of doing this forces out the peg, which falls out, drawing the end of the paper ribbon after it. By keeping the hands in motion, the coil is gradually paid out. When it is exhausted, the performer extends the arms, and lets go the vanisher, leaving the hands empty.

It is hardly necessary to remark that the paper ribbon should be of the same colour as the handkerchief. The trick may likewise be performed with silk ribbon, with very pretty effect, but the coiling of the silk is a troublesome matter, whereas the paper coils may be purchased by the dozen, at an almost nominal price.

A HANDKERCHIEF TRANSFORMED INTO PAPER SHAVINGS.

This pretty little trick, which has one or two elements of novelty, is the invention of a German wizard, Herr Camill Bihler. The following account of it is borrowed from the magical serial, *Die Zauberwelt*.

The effect of the trick is as follows: After exhibiting

¹ For a pull of this kind, a very good plan is to have the rubber led through a metal or ivory ring (the latter for choice, as minimizing friction) sewn to the left side of the vest, at the waist, just where back and front meet. The free end of the elastic passes round the back, and is thence brought round the front and is fastened to one of the brace-buttons on the right side. The vanisher thus arranged is easily got at, and the pull works with just the right amount of freedom.

a cartridge-paper cylinder, and showing that it is empty, the performer inserts a silk handkerchief into it and places it upright on a chair. He next fills a glass with paper cuttings, covers it with a handkerchief, and causes it to disappear. On lifting the paper cylinder, the handkerchief is no longer beneath it, the glass of paper shavings having taken its place.

This, however, is but the first stage of the trick. Throwing aside the paper cylinder, the performer takes a piece of ordinary newspaper and fashions it into a cone, with which he covers the glass. When the covering is again removed, the glass is still there, but the paper shavings have vanished, the handkerchief being found in their stead.

The requirements for the trick are as under:

1. An ordinary cigar-box (or other box of suitable size) filled with paper shavings.
2. Two glass tumblers of cylindrical shape, alike in general appearance. One of them is, however, an ordinary tumbler, the other bottomless, as described at page 92. To this latter is adapted a pasteboard shape, closed at top, but open at bottom, after the manner of the familiar "bran glass," but covered with paper shavings instead of bran. The upper part of this shape has a projecting edge, to facilitate lifting it out of the glass. The two glasses must be of such a height that when either of them is placed behind the cigar-box it shall be hidden from view.
3. The paper cylinder. This must be from six to seven inches high, and of such a diameter as to fit easily over either of the two glasses. This stands at the outset on the top of the cigar-box, behind which is

the bottomless glass containing the cardboard shape. The second glass stands in view beside the box.

4. A small silk handkerchief.

5. A larger handkerchief, double, with a disc of cardboard in the centre, corresponding in size with the top of the glass.¹

The performer first calls attention to the paper cylinder. Having shown unmistakably that it is empty, he places it upright on the table just behind the cigar-box; and in so doing, unknown to the spectators, passes it over the hidden glass. As the right hand does this, the left hand seizes the box, and a moment later brings it forward for inspection, together with the unprepared glass. Leaving these in the hands of the spectators, he takes the handkerchief, rolls it into a ball, and picking up the paper cylinder with gentle pressure, so as to keep the concealed glass from slipping out, introduces the handkerchief openly beneath it (really into the pasteboard shell within the glass) and places the whole on a chair.

Taking back the box and the visible glass from the spectators, he fills the glass with paper shavings; covers it with the double handkerchief, and places it on his table, which is provided with a servante. He makes believe to pick up and bring forward the glass thus covered, but in reality lowers the glass on to the servante, and picks up the handkerchief only, kept extended by the disc in its centre. Pronouncing the mystic "Pass," he gives the handkerchief a shake. The glass has vanished. He lifts up the paper cylinder, and exhibits, in place of the silk handkerchief which

¹ There are various ways of arranging such a handkerchief. For one of the best, see *Modern Magic*, p. 370.

was placed under it, the bottomless glass, apparently filled with paper shavings, and being ostensibly the same which has just disappeared from the larger handkerchief. The cylinder is shown to be empty and is thrown aside.

The next step is to form the newspaper cone, which must be of such a size that when placed over the glass it shall just touch the upper edge of the latter. After forming the cone its lower edge should be cut straight with a pair of scissors. In order to achieve this satisfactorily, guide-marks in pencil should be made on the paper beforehand, this precaution greatly facilitating the formation of a cone of the right shape and size. The cone thus formed is placed over the glass. In lifting it off again the performer grasps it at such a height as to just clip the projecting edge of the paper shell, which is lifted with it, leaving the handkerchief visible in the glass in place of the supposed paper shavings.

While all eyes are drawn to this new state of things, the shell is allowed to slip out on to the servante; and the paper cone is thrown carelessly down, with its mouth towards the spectators.

To preclude the possibility of the handkerchief, from its lightness, being lifted out with the shell, the performer is recommended, in rolling it up, secretly to roll up in it a five-shilling piece, or a disc of lead of corresponding size. With the handkerchief thus weighted, there is no fear of a *contretemps* in this particular.

THE EGG AND HANDKERCHIEF TRICK (MODERN METHODS).

Every reader is doubtless acquainted with the old "egg and handkerchief" trick associated with the name

of Colonel Stodare,¹ and consisting of an egg and a silk handkerchief (the former placed in a glass tumbler on the table, and the latter held in the hands of the performer) being made to change places. Even in its original form, it is a clever trick, but the ingenuity of later inventors has greatly added to its effectiveness, one material improvement being the performance of the trick with real eggs, in place of the blown egg and metal shell which were used by Stodare.

Apropos of artificial eggs, however, I may here pause to note two little improvements in this particular. The first is the use of ivory (a form of celluloid) as the material for the egg. Eggs made of this substance are lighter, more easily palmed, and more natural in appearance than the metal eggs. Further, having no enamel to wear off, they last longer. The other improvement has relation to the hollow egg used for "disappearing" a handkerchief, and consists in making the opening at the smaller end of the egg, instead of at the side. An egg thus made may be held between the second finger and thumb, and shown freely on all sides, the ball of the thumb concealing the opening.

The following version of the trick affords a good example of one use of the egg thus constructed.

D'ALVINI'S EGG AND HANDKERCHIEF TRICK.

In effect, this trick is as follows: The performer, having borrowed a lady's handkerchief and laid it on a plate, professes to be about to pass it into an egg (a real one). In the course of his introductory remarks, however, he has the misfortune, while holding it over

¹ *Modern Magic*, p. 260.

the plate, to drop the egg, which is naturally broken, the unfortunate handkerchief receiving the contents.

After the usual apologies, and the assurance that he never (or hardly ever) had such an accident before, the performer consoles himself with the reflection that he has only reversed the intended effect. Instead of passing the handkerchief into the egg, he has passed the egg into the handkerchief, in which he gathers up the remains accordingly. He offers the handkerchief (with its contents) to the owner, but she naturally declines to receive it in such a condition. A happy thought strikes him. He is bound to produce a magical effect of some sort. He will place the handkerchief and smashed egg together in his pistol, and endeavour to catch them when it is fired. He accordingly fetches a pistol from the wing, loads it with the egg and handkerchief, and gets some one (either his stage assistant or a volunteer from the audience) to fire it at him from the opposite side of the stage, he meanwhile holding his closed hands aloft, as if to catch the articles in their flight. The pistol is fired. He opens his hands, looking first at one, then at the other, but both are empty. For a moment he looks dumfounded; then his face lights up again with renewed cheerfulness. From his mouth, screwed up as for whistling, he draws out the borrowed handkerchief, dry and clean, followed a moment later by the egg, whole as at first.

The secret lies primarily in the substitution of a dummy handkerchief for the borrowed one. This latter is vested, while the substitute is laid on the plate and receives the broken egg. When the performer retires to fetch his pistol he is only absent for a moment, but during that moment he slips the borrowed hand-

of the tail of the snake. Still keeping with the left hand a firm grip of the ring, he draws the hands smartly apart. The effect is that the snake-skin is drawn out to its full length, the backbone and the two suspended handkerchiefs being simultaneously drawn inside it. It may now be grasped by the middle, and if well made, more particularly in regard to the steel backbone, may be made to move head and tail in very fair imitation of life.

The method which was used by Hartz for producing a similar effect is different, but not less ingenious. The performer in this case comes forward with two small silk handkerchiefs, green and yellow, one in each hand, each held by one corner. After a little patter, he takes hold of the free end of each with the opposite hand and twists the two into a coil. There is a quick movement of the arms. The handkerchiefs have disappeared; and in place of them is a snake, though of an equally harmless character.

The secret here lies in the fact that the handkerchief shown in the left hand is attached to the tail of the snake, which is hidden in the left sleeve. The handkerchief shown in the right hand is attached to a pull, on the Buatier principle, in the right sleeve. The use of the pull causes the twisted handkerchiefs to pass up the right sleeve; and they in turn draw the snake out of the opposite sleeve.

THE DANCING HANDKERCHIEF.

There are two forms of this trick, one of the "parlour-objic" order, the other suitable for stage presentation. The first is merely a new version of the old trick of the dancing sailor." The performer attaches a piece of

fine black silk thread, about sixteen inches in length, from leg to leg of his trousers, just below the knee. The only additional piece of apparatus necessary is a sharp black pin bent into the shape of an S hook. This may be hooked till needed into any convenient part of the performer's clothing.

Borrowing a handkerchief, he ties a loose knot in one corner, and in so doing manages to hook the pin into it, *point upwards*, the necessary consequence being that the opposite bend has its extremity pointing downwards. The handkerchief thus treated represents an elementary sort of doll, the knot forming the head. Taking a seat facing the company, with his legs apart, he announces that the doll is about to dance. He accordingly places it in position two or three times, but each time, as might be expected, it falls to the ground. After a moment or two of pretended embarrassment, he discovers the reason. The doll will not dance without music, and some one is accordingly requested to play some lively measure on the piano. Again he places the doll in position, but this time with the hook over the thread, and now, when the music commences, it no longer falls, but begins to wriggle about after a weird and uncanny fashion, the necessary movement of the knees being covered by the performer's beating time upon them with his hands. When the performance has lasted long enough, he picks up the handkerchief by the corner projecting above the knot, and in handing it back to the owner removes the bent pin, after which the secret is safe from detection.

In the stage form of the trick a black silk thread is also used, but the arrangements are a little more

elaborate. The thread crosses the stage from side to side, lying till needed upon the floor. During the performance of the trick each end is held by an assistant. At starting, the handkerchief, which may or may not be a borrowed one, but should be fairly large, is laid upon the performer's table, behind which he passes while the thread is still on the ground. The moment he has done so, the thread is raised horizontally to the height of a foot or so above the table. Standing behind it, he begins to prepare the handkerchief, the first step being to tie a small knot in each of two diagonally opposite corners. He then ties a loose *double* knot in one of the other corners (the object of tying twice over being to take up a larger portion of the handkerchief). This knot is tied round the horizontal thread. Finally, he tucks the fourth corner into the knot last made, the result being a grotesque sort of puppet, with head and arms complete.¹

During the above process, the assistants at the wings, the moment the principal knot is tied, slacken the thread, and then move forward as far as circumstances permit, so that the thread, when taut, shall clear the table. When the figure is complete, the performer begins to make mesmeric passes over it, announcing that he intends to make it dance. At this stage, a simultaneous pull, followed by an immediate slackening of the thread, jerks the handkerchief off the table on to the floor. "Oh! you want to escape, do you? but you won't do it. If you won't dance on the table, you shall do so on the floor," says the performer. As he says

¹ Some performers tie the large knot (representing the head) only, letting the remainder of the handkerchief hang loose. This is a matter which may be left to individual taste.

this, he moves forward and steps over the thread, so as to get in front of it. He waves his wand horizontally over the handkerchief, and after a few moments it is seen to be slightly agitated. Presently it begins to stand erect, and finally, after a fashion, to dance, actuated by the thread in the hands of the assistants, who should have duly practised their task, considerable skill being required to perform it properly.

An additional effect may be got by placing a chair over the handkerchief while still dancing. This, of course, makes not the least difference to its performance; while it effectually negatives the idea which naturally occurs to the minds of most spectators, that the dancing figure is actuated by a thread from above. The possibility of using a horizontal thread is much less likely to suggest itself.

When the dance has lasted long enough, the performer picks up the handkerchief and brings it forward, still knotted, and, if borrowed, returns it to the owner. First, however, one of the assistants releases his end of the thread, which is then rapidly drawn away through the knot by the other, leaving no trace of the *modus operandi*.

It is a commonplace among conjurers that a trick is what the performer makes it. The present is a good example. Clumsily and badly performed, its effect will be *nil*. Artistically led up to (say, by the trick of the rapping wand, described at page 113, or some other trick of a quasi-spiritualistic kind) and worked with address, it becomes a first-class illusion.

RIGHT AND LEFT.

To get the maximum of effect out of this very pretty trick, which is a slightly altered version of a German

original, it should follow some other in which two silk handkerchiefs of different colours, say red and blue, have been produced. A couple of glass test tubes (such as are used by chemists), about six inches in length, are lying on the performer's table. Taking one in each hand, he shows that there is "no deception" about them, and invites the audience to decide which of the two handkerchiefs he shall put into each tube. There is no *équivoque* as to "right" or "left," but free choice is really given. In accordance with the decision, he stuffs the red handkerchief into the one tube and the blue one into the other. Taking a tube in each hand, he waves them in the air, pronouncing the mystic "Pass." The two handkerchiefs visibly change places. They are actually seen to cross in the air, each passing into the opposite tube.

Well executed, the trick appears like a genuine miracle, but, as is frequently the case with the best illusions, the explanation is extremely simple,—when you know it. In the centre of the closed end of each tube a minute hole has been blown, special care being taken to leave a perfectly rounded edge. Through each of these two holes is threaded one end of a piece of fine but strong black thread, about a yard and a quarter in length,¹ with a loop at each end. The two tubes are laid on the table with their mouths towards the spectators, and with the thread arranged as shown in Fig. 161, wherein A and B represent the two tubes, and *a b* the two loops respectively appertaining to them. It will be observed that the two threads are crossed, so

¹ The precise length must be determined by actual experiment, as it will vary a little, according to the length of arm and breadth of chest of the performer.

that the loop *a* is brought opposite the mouth of the tube B, and *vice versâ*. In exhibiting the tubes, the performer takes care so to handle them as not to disturb the arrangement of the thread.

We will suppose that the audience decide that the red handkerchief is to be placed in tube B. Standing behind the point *c*, and laying the handkerchief squarely in front of him, the performer folds it longitudinally

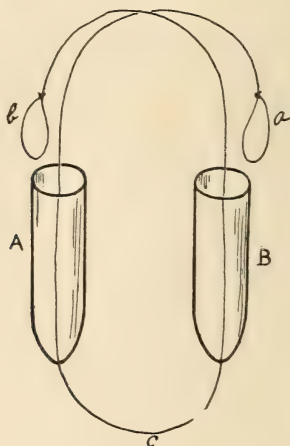


FIG. 161.

two or three times, and doubling the roll thus made in half, finally pushes it *ends downwards* into the tube. In the course of the folding, however, he has secretly passed the roll as far as its centre through the loop *a*. He now folds the blue handkerchief after the same fashion, passing it through *b*, and packs it into the other tube. This done, he takes B in the right hand and A in the left, and moves away from the table. Holding his arms straight out before him, with the mouths of the tubes pointing to the spectators, he makes an upward

and downward movement with the arms, at the same time moving them somewhat apart. This causes a pull upon the thread. Loop *a*, with the red handkerchief, is drawn swiftly out of B, and flies to its proper home in A; loop *b* and the blue handkerchief passing with similar lightning speed out of A and into B.

The handkerchiefs should be at once pulled out of the tubes and drawn out of the loops, when they can of course tell no tales. The holes in the tubes should be just large enough to allow the thread to be drawn clear through them in spite of the loops, when the tubes may likewise be handed for examination. If any one remarks upon the holes, the performer compliments him on his acuteness; telling him "that is where the handkerchiefs really get out, but it is only very clever people who discover it."

In the original form of the trick the handkerchiefs were from the outset spread upon the table in front of the tubes, each with one of the loops (which in this case are slip-knots made very long) already round it. This, however, has sundry disadvantages, as such a formal disposition suggests prearrangement. The handkerchiefs cannot be shown apart from the tubes, neither can a choice be given as to which handkerchief shall be placed in a given tube. The method above described is a little more difficult to work, but makes, I venture to think, a more finished illusion.

THE FLYING HANDKERCHIEFS.

As a pendant to the last trick I cannot do better than describe one of equal ingenuity and having a good deal

of family likeness to it. It is contributed by Mr. J. Nelson Downs (the well-known "King of Coins") to a recent American work on magic,¹ but from the terms in which he introduces it I am not quite clear whether or not it is of his own invention.

On the magician's table are two clear glass bottles. He produces, by magical or other means, a silk handkerchief, and invites the spectators to decide in which of the two glass bottles he shall place it. The choice having been made, he pushes the handkerchief fairly down into the selected bottle, where it is clearly visible. The other bottle is as clearly empty.

Taking a bottle by the neck in each hand, he advances to the front of the stage. He waves the bottle gently up and down, saying "One, two, three." At the word "three" the handkerchief vanishes with a flash from the bottle in which it was placed, and appears in the other. A startling effect! but here, again, the explanation is simple—when you know it.

Of the two bottles one is quite unprepared. The other has a minute hole drilled through the centre of the bottom. A piece of stout black thread, two feet long, is firmly fixed (presumably by means of cement) to the bottom of the unprepared bottle. The opposite end is then passed, from below, through the hole in the bottom of the other bottle, and brought up through the neck. To the free end a swivel (such as is used for watch-chains) is attached, and this is stuck into a small hole, made for the purpose, at the back of the table.

The performer has on his person a pull, attached to the left wrist, and thence passing up the sleeve, behind

¹ *Magic and its Professors*. By Henry Ridgely Evans. Geo. Routledge & Sons, Ltd.

the back, and down the right sleeve, where it terminates in a loop, of convenient size for vanishing a handkerchief. Inside the left sleeve is bestowed a silk handkerchief, to the centre of which is attached a thread loop three inches long, which is allowed to hang out an inch or so beyond the shirt-cuff.

The trick begins with the production (by any of the means already described) of a duplicate handkerchief of similar appearance. The performer, standing behind the table, asks in which of the bottles (right or left) he shall place it; and by means of the usual *équivoque* ("my right" or "your right," etc., as suits him best) arranges that the choice shall fall upon the unprepared bottle. Into this he thrusts the handkerchief, first, however, getting round it the loop of the pull.

This is done with the right hand (the bottles being placed accordingly). Meanwhile the left hand introduces the loop of the handkerchief in the sleeve into the swivel, which he forthwith draws from the hole in which it was stuck and leaves upon the table.

The next step is to take the bottles by the necks as already described, the arms being flexed at the elbow, so that the pull shall be slack. At the word "three" the arms are straightened, and at the same time extended laterally.

The pull is thereby drawn taut, the handkerchief in the one bottle is drawn up the right sleeve by the pull, and at the same moment the pull upon the thread draws the handkerchief from the left sleeve into the second bottle.

Having done its work, the thread may be broken and the bottles separated. This done, even if they be examined, no one is likely to find any clue to the mystery.

THE SHOWER OF SWEETS (IMPROVED METHOD).

This forms an effective little addendum to a handkerchief trick. Although of venerable antiquity, its popularity among the juveniles never wanes. As most readers will be aware, it consists, in effect, of picking up a handkerchief by its centre and holding it over a plate, when at command a shower of bonbons of various kinds falls from it.

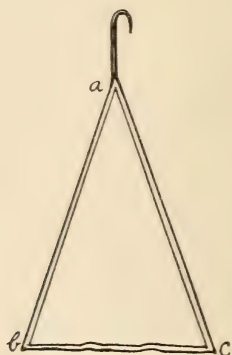


FIG. 162.

Two methods of producing this result were discussed in *Modern Magic* (page 251), and I should not have again alluded to it but for the fact that I am enabled to inform the reader of another, and in some respects better method, being that used by Hartz, who, even in the working of an old trick, generally manages to introduce some element of novelty. The apparatus used is in appearance merely the familiar conical bag, closed at the mouth by two straight pieces of clock-spring, and opening by pressure on their ends. Hartz's bag, however (see Fig. 162), has in addition a stiff wire bent to an acute angle at the point *a* and stitched into each of the

seams *ab* and *ac*. To this wire, at the angle, is soldered the necessary hook for suspending the bag behind the table.

The advantage of this arrangement is that the bag can be opened by pressure on these wires, however high up, and that direct pressure on the ends of the mouth is no longer needed. By holding the apex of the bag within the handkerchief between the first and second fingers, and pressing the wire arms together with the third finger and thumb, the performer can produce the desired result with one hand only.

There is a further speciality in the arrangement of the bonbons. In filling the bag half a dozen of large size, such as sugared almonds or chocolate creams, are first inserted, then a dozen rather smaller, and on these a dozen smaller still, the space finally left vacant being filled with very small sweets, say of the caraway comfit order. A gentle pressure on the upper part of the bag opens the mouth wide enough to let these last escape. A second pressure, opening it a little wider, gives passage to the next larger kind, and so on, the gradual increase in size adding considerably to the effect of the trick.

A POSTSCRIPT.

I cannot better conclude this lengthy chapter than by briefly noticing one or two little "wrinkles" kindly communicated to me by one of the most promising wizards of the younger generation, Mr. Maurice Garland. Mr. Garland is essentially a sleight-of-hand conjurer, and prides himself on giving his show with the irreducible minimum of apparatus. All he needs for his performance can usually be carried in his pockets.

To that end, he has devoted much thought and ingenuity to the invention of small and portable appliances, and to the effective use of such contrivances.

One of these is an ordinary "ping-pong" ball, in which has been cut, with a sharp knife, a circular hole an inch in diameter. This forms a capital handkerchief fake, being at once light, compact, and easily palmed. One of Mr. Garland's special uses for it is to change a handkerchief to an egg. His method is as follows: The ball is held in the closed left hand, with the opening towards the thumb, after the manner of the "finger" in the trick described at page 213. The handkerchief is thrown over the same hand, and is then worked into the ball by means of successive "pokes" with the forefinger of the right hand, in which is concealed the egg; the use of the forefinger as above allowing the other fingers to curl round the silk in a perfectly natural way without suggesting that there is anything concealed in the hand. When the egg is fairly packed into the ball, the performer observes (as if he had overheard some remark to that effect): "You think the handkerchief is not in my hand? You are mistaken, for here it is." So saying, he turns the hand thumb upwards, in so doing turning round the ball in the hand so as to bring the opening downwards, and draws the handkerchief out of the hand from the under side. Once more throwing the handkerchief over the left hand, he works the ball round again within the hand and pokes the handkerchief into it as before. When it is fully worked in, he brings the hands together, passes the egg over the ball, and exhibits it in the right hand at the tips of the fingers, the ball taking its place in the palm.

It is quite possible that some one, possessing that

"little knowledge" which is proverbially dangerous, may ask to examine the egg; expecting to find that it is one of the hollow variety familiar to conjurers, and that the performer will be made more or less uncomfortable by the request. To his surprise, the egg is handed to him with a genial smile, and his amiable design of putting the performer "in a hole" merely affords fresh evidence of the genuineness of the transformation.

By the addition of a loop, two and a half inches long, of silk or fine gut, attached to the ball on the side remote from the opening, both the palms and the backs of the hands can be shown, though the fake is in position for use. For this purpose the loop is passed over the left thumb. The palms are first shown, the ball in this case lying behind the hand, close to the wrist. The hands are then turned over and the backs shown, the ball now hanging down on the inside of the right hand. The hands being now brought together, the fake is available for the production or disappearance of a handkerchief, as the case may require.

Another specialty of Mr. Maurice Garland is as follows: A silk handkerchief and an egg are shown together in the right hand. The egg is tossed in the air, and caught again, but the handkerchief has vanished. This pretty vanish is worked by means of a thread pull, drawn by the left hand at the same moment when the egg is thrown in the air. As will be seen, the method is old, but the effect produced is none the less a genuine novelty.

Another instantaneous "vanish" for a handkerchief is independent of any pull or other mechanical contrivance. The performer takes the handkerchief by one

corner in the right hand, and standing with the same side towards the spectators, makes a feint of throwing it into the air, somewhat towards the left side. This movement is thrice repeated, with the words, "One, two, three." At the word "three," the handkerchief disappears, and the hand is seen empty. As a matter of fact the missing *mouchoir* is deposited, at the commencement of the last upward throw, between the coat and vest on the left side, the left hand grasping the lapel of the coat and opening it slightly in order to facilitate the introduction.

Baldly described in print, it would seem as if even a child could not be taken in by so simple a device, but in the hands of Mr. Garland it produces a complete illusion.

CHAPTER VIII.

FLAG TRICKS.

CLOSELY akin to the subject of handkerchief tricks is that of "flag" tricks; indeed, of late, such a trick, in some form or other, seems to be regarded as the natural finish of a handkerchief trick, the handkerchiefs produced, or some of them, being made by way of climax to blend their colours in the form of a flag. In many instances, however, flag production is exhibited as an independent trick.

The oldest form of the feat is that described in *Modern Magic* (page 432), wherein from a couple of small silken flags are produced an immense number of paper flags of like dimensions. One of the first improvements made in the trick was the substitution of small pieces of tissue paper—red, white, and blue—for the two silk flags. This is a more logical commencement, the production of paper from paper being more natural than that of paper from silk.

The next point to which the ingenuity of conjurers was directed was the disposal of the flags in readiness for production. The genial wizard, Charles Bertram, who was one of the first to make the trick his own, and who presents it with unsurpassable ease and finish, has disclosed in his book, *Isn't It Wonderful!* the details of his working. His flags, which are about three inches

long by two in width, are rolled into packets of a gross each, wrapped in black tissue paper; and one such packet is bestowed behind the lapel of the coat on each side, hitched on to the end of an upturned pin. As the material for the intended flag-factory, three pieces of tissue paper, of different colours, and about twelve inches square, are exhibited. These are handed for examination, and taken back one by one. When two have been returned, they are held, one upon another, in the right hand, *with the second finger in front*, the other fingers being concealed behind, next the body. As the performer leans forward to take (with the left hand) the third paper from the person who has been examining it, the right hand rests for a moment on the lapel of the coat, and the little packet on that side is lifted off the pin between the thumb and the first and second fingers. The hands being brought together, the little packet is opened behind the three papers, and, under cover of the gradual appearance of the flags, the papers, including the black wrapper, are rolled up tightly and palmed in the right hand.

Bertram's next step is to reproduce the three coloured pieces of paper, the black piece, compressed as small as possible, being allowed to fall to the ground among the flags.¹ The performer then gets possession, in the same way as before, of the second packet, and develops it in like manner. The trick is brought to a conclusion by the production of a large silk flag, which, folded so as to

¹ With all due respect to such a master of the art as Bertram, I venture to think that the reproduction of the three papers is a mistake, the more plausible theory of the trick being that they have formed the material of the flags produced. The second packet of flags can be got into the left hand with equal ease under cover of the production of the last dozen or so of the first packet.

open out instantly and freely, is deposited either in a loading pocket under the breast of the coat, or inside the opening of the vest, at the pleasure of the performer. This is got into the hands while they are still full of the small flags, and while the large flag is spread in front of the body, the performer has ample opportunity to slip the pieces of tissue paper and the second wrapper into one of his pockets.

FLAGS AND PAPER SHAVINGS.

In another version of the trick last described, the performer, when he first exhibits the three pieces of tissue paper, has a ball of tightly compressed paper shavings of corresponding colours, held together by strips of similarly coloured paper, already palmed in one hand. Rolling the three papers first shown into a ball, he palms this, exhibiting in place of it the ball of paper shavings. Showing this ball in the left hand, he with the right hand takes a fan from an inner breast pocket on the left side, and in so doing leaves the crumpled papers in the pocket.¹ He then begins to fan the ball, and under cover of gently moving it about, breaks the encircling strips, and allows the paper shavings to expand, which they do very freely. The fan may now be laid aside and the shavings developed between the hands. Under cover of their rapid increase it is an easy matter to get a bundle of small paper flags from under the vest. Presently flags are seen to appear instead of paper shavings. Those first produced are allowed to fall, like the paper shavings, on the floor, but

¹ Some performers pick up the fan from the table, and in so doing drop the papers on the servante.

the performer bethinks himself that this will create trouble in collecting them afterwards. Holding the flags in one hand, he picks up with the other a tray which is placed in readiness somewhere close at hand, and in so doing gets into the hand a second packet of flags, which is attached, by wax or otherwise, just under the hinder edge of the tray. He places the tray on a chair and proceeds to develop these flags, letting them fall on the tray. A few, however, find their way to the ground. He stoops to pick them up, and as he drops them on the tray rests his disengaged hand, with a perfectly natural movement, on the back of the chair. In the moment during which the hand so rests another bundle of flags is palmed from behind the chair.

The performer may further elaborate the trick, if he so desires, by having additional supplies concealed upon his own person, but save in the case of producing larger and larger flags, to which I shall presently advert, three bundles should be amply sufficient.

Another expedient, where the performer employs an assistant, is to make *him* bring forward the tray, having attached to his back by a bent pin another packet of flags, which the performer, in the act of dropping the last of the visible flags on the tray, can secure without difficulty.

FLAGS CONVERTED INTO SILKEN STREAMERS.

A pretty finish to a flag trick is to throw, apparently, the last of the flags towards the audience; but instead of flags, three long streamers, of corresponding colours, shoot out towards them. To produce this effect, three pieces of differently coloured silk ribbon, three yards long by half an inch wide, are sewn by one end to a two-

inch square of any stiff material, say a piece of sole leather. To the free end of each is attached a little piece of sheet lead half an inch square. Each piece of ribbon is then rolled up (weighted end first, so that the lead is in the middle of the coil) and the whole kept in position by a strip of paper, which is torn off at the right moment. The square of leather is gripped by the palm, and if a throwing movement in the direction of the spectators be then made, the little weight in the centre will cause each coil to unroll itself and the ribbons to shoot out over their heads. The performer gathers them in; coiling them in long loops over his left hand, and under cover of so doing gets into his hand, for subsequent production, a packet of considerably larger flags than any previously produced. These last may be six inches by four, or even larger, and mounted fan-fashion, that is to say, the sticks are all fastened together; closely at bottom (either by means of a rivet or of a piece of tape to which they are sewn); less closely a little higher up, by means of thread, so that they cannot diverge beyond a certain uniform distance. The fan is kept closed till needed by means of a strip of paper pasted round it.

Some performers further elaborate the trick by producing three or four or even more such "fans" in succession; each consisting of flags a little larger than the one that preceded it. A series of these held in front of the performer—the small flags to the front and the larger ones behind—produces a very pretty effect.

THE PRODUCTION OF FLAGS ON STAVES COMPLETE.

The small flags, produced as above described, all have staves of proportional size. The large silk flags,

where used, were until recently produced without staves. Up-to-date performers are, however,

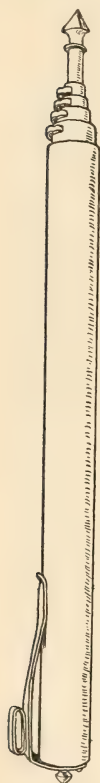


FIG. 163.

not content with this, but produce each flag on a rigid staff, in some instances six feet long, or even more. The reader will naturally wonder how a staff of such a length (or indeed a couple, for these large flags are usually produced in pairs) can be concealed about the person of the performer. The secret lies in the fact that the staves are made on the telescopic principle, so that when closed they occupy a comparatively small space. Though, however, the principle is the same, the staves made vary a good deal in detail, and consequently in trustworthiness. I cannot do better than describe those of the pattern supplied by Messrs. Hamley, which, for finish and general effectiveness, are the best I have yet seen.

The staff for a flag three feet square is, when extended, a little over four feet long. The "telescope" consists of five brass tubes, sliding one over the other.¹ Four of these are each ten inches in length; the fifth and innermost being thirteen inches, and being surmounted at the top by a brass knob. This inner tube (see Fig. 163) terminates at its opposite end in a little conical stud

FIG.
164.

¹ The staff from which the diagrams are taken was designed to carry a somewhat larger flag, and, as will be observed, has six tubes instead of five. There is no other difference of construction.

which, when the "telescope" is closed, engages itself in a wire loop at the bottom, but is again freed when desired by pressure on the thumb-piece shown at the side. The object of this arrangement is to prevent the telescopic tube opening out prematurely. To make it extend itself, the performer grasps the outer tube at bottom, presses the thumb-piece, and gives the tube a semicircular swing with the arm, when centrifugal force causes each of the inner tubes to fly out to its full extent, and the staff assumes the appearance depicted in Fig. 164.

It should be mentioned that each of the tubes is made very slightly smaller at its upper end and larger at its lower end. The difference is so minute as not to be perceptible to the eye, but the arrangement serves the double purpose of preventing the sections coming apart and of keeping the staff extended after it has been once developed; the base of each tube wedging itself into the upper end of the next. The staff above described, unlike most others for the same purpose, may after production be left standing upright without any fear of its collapsing.

At the upper end of the smallest tube there is a minute hole, and at the upper end of each of the next four tubes a little eyelet. To these one edge of the flag is secured, the final result being, when the flag is unfurled, as depicted in Fig. 165.

To prepare the flag thus mounted for use in the trick, the telescope arrangement is closed, and the flag is folded in accordion pleats, first lengthwise, then crosswise, till it forms a small and compact package.

Thus arranged, flag and staff are placed in an appropriately shaped breast-pocket inside the coat.

Reaching into this with the opposite hand, under cover of the flags already produced, and taking a firm hold of

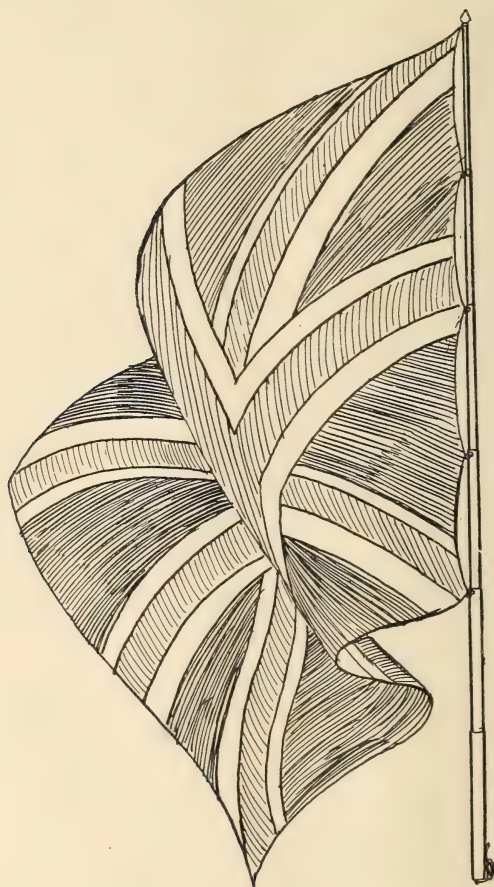


FIG. 165.

what may be called the handle end of the staff, the performer brings it out with a semicircular outward swing, when flag and staff at once expand to their full dimen-

sions. Where two flags are to be produced both breast pockets are loaded accordingly, the right hand producing the left-hand flag, and *vice versa*.

The above is, I believe, the most general arrangement, but there is considerable difference among performers as to the mode of concealment about the person. Stillwell, the well-known American performer, who makes the production of two large flags the climax of his "Handkerchief Act," bestows them in pockets inside the front of his vest, the upper ends of the staves pointing downwards.¹

THE FLAG AND WORSTED BALL.

This is an improved and more up-to-date version of an ingenious but somewhat crude trick described in one of the early numbers of the magical serial, *Mahatma*.

The performer having produced and used in the course of his performance a small silk flag, bethinks himself what further use he can make of it. Introducing, magically or otherwise, a worsted ball about

¹ My ingenious correspondent, Mr. C. O. Williams, places the butt of each flag-staff in one of the ordinary vest pockets, the flag itself, duly folded, lying under the coat, against the front of the shoulder. The advantages of this simple arrangement are so obvious that it seems extraordinary no one should have hit on it before, but I am not aware that any one has done so.

With the flags disposed in this manner the "locking" arrangement at the foot of the butt becomes unnecessary.

Mr. David Devant, who produces the biggest flags I have yet seen (measuring in fact 6 ft. 4 in. by 6 ft. 2 in., with staves 6 ft. 6 in. long), gets them, under cover of three small flags only 24 inches by 18, from a central well in a table of the kind described in Chapter III. The effect can only be described by the German word, *Kolossal*! Our own nearest equivalent, "immense," is quite inadequate to express it.

two inches in diameter, he places this in a covered glass vase, which is left in full view. He then exhibits an ordinary tumbler. Over this he drops a cardboard cylinder, eight inches high, and of such diameter as to go easily over the glass. Into the glass, thus screened, he drops the silk handkerchief.

Nothing could be fairer in appearance; and yet at his command the two articles change places. On the paper cylinder being removed, the worsted ball is found in the tumbler, while the handkerchief has taken its place in the covered vase.



FIG. 166.

To prepare for the trick, a duplicate silk handkerchief is packed into as small a compass as possible, and round it is rolled worsted till it forms a ball of the desired dimensions. To the outer end of the worsted is attached the tongue portion of a little cylindrical clasp, or "snap," such as is used to connect the ends of a necklace. (See Fig. 166.) The barrel portion of such snap is attached to the end of a thin silk line, which is led away through eyelets in one of the hinder legs of the performer's table (or through the leg) to the hand of an assistant behind the scenes. The barrel itself is stuck, mouth upwards, in a little hole made for the purpose in the surface of the table. The vase used (see Fig. 167) may be purchased at any glass warehouse. It is of the kind used for holding preserves at the breakfast table, and having a horseshoe-shaped opening at the edge of the lid for the accommodation of the spoon.

When the ball has been produced, in one or other of the score of ways known to every conjurer, it is dropped into the vase. In placing the lid on, the performer

brings the loose end of the wool out through the opening in the lid, and while moving the vase a little forward with the one hand, with the other inserts the little "tongue" into the mouth of the snap, which he then lifts out of its hole. The moment the connection is thus made, the assistant begins to "wind up" at his end. The result is that the ball is gradually unwound, and the worsted drawn clean away, while the handkerchief, released from confinement, spreads itself in the glass vase.



FIG. 167.

The latter should be of a cut or moulded pattern, in pretty strong relief, in which case the movement of the ball will not be visible through it.

The ball which subsequently appears in the tumbler is of the "spring" or "multiplying" kind, with the necessary amount of worsted wound over it, and kept in place by a few stitches. The last yard and a half, or so, for greater naturalness should be simply wound. Such a ball can of course be pressed quite flat, and in this condition it is secured to the inside of the cardboard cylinder. For this purpose a piece of stiffish brass wire six or seven inches in length is first bent into the shape

of a lady's hair pin, and then doubled on itself, as *a* in Fig. 168. This is slipped over the edge of the cylinder,

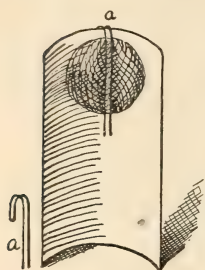


FIG. 168.

with the longer ends inside, and under these longer ends the ball is packed, in a flattened condition, as shown in the diagram (representing a sectional view of the cylinder, with the ball in position). In picking up the cylinder, the performer does so with the fingers inside, covering the flattened ball, and the thumb outside, concealing the clip. Thus held, the cylinder can be shown inside and out, being apparently quite empty.

In placing the cylinder over the glass, the performer pushes down the ball far enough to free it from the clip, when it naturally drops into the glass and assumes its normal shape. The clip, which is left in the hand, is got rid of in the act of picking up the handkerchief in order to place it (apparently) in the glass. Various ways of doing this might be suggested, but nothing is much better than to fold it small, and, in apparently taking it in one hand, leave it clipped between the first and second fingers of the other. The closed thumb and fingers of the hand which ostensibly holds it are then lowered for a moment into the top of the cylinder, moved apart, and brought up empty.

The trick is now done. The performer takes off the cylinder and rolls the ball out upon the table. He then uncovers the glass vase and shows that the handkerchief has passed therein. If he is using such a table as described in Chapter III., he may utilize it to substitute a solid ball for the trick ball, after which

the whole of the articles employed can be offered for examination.

DEVANT'S "TRANSVAAL FLAG" TRICK.¹

I have seen two or three explanations of this very popular trick, but they have without exception been incorrect in many particulars. The true explanation, for which I am indebted to the inventor himself, is both simpler and neater than any of the fancy versions.

The trick is introduced as an exhibition of swordsmanship, the performer professing to be about to sever with one cut the handkerchief, merely laid on the blade of the sword; a feat which the great Saladin himself (see *Ivanhoe*) regarded as a notable achievement. In order to hurt nobody's feelings (or nobody's near enough to be worth considering) he selects the Boer flag for the experiment. The Boer flag, I may mention, consists (or I should rather say, did consist) of horizontal stripes of red, white, and blue, with a vertical strip of green on the side next the flagstaff.

The flag used is of silk, and in size about eighteen inches by twelve. The sword is of the "dress" variety, the lack of a cutting edge being, for the purpose of the trick, immaterial. After a little fancy sword exercise, the performer announces that he is going to try whether he can cut the Boer flag in half. He lays the flag across

¹ When this trick was first produced, the Boers were "the enemy," and their flag was fair game for an entertainer to poke fun at. Since that time circumstances have altered, and it is probable that Mr. Devant may in future performances think it well to substitute some other flag, but I describe the trick under the name and with the *mise en scène* with which it has become identified.

the blade, close to the hilt, one half hanging down on either side, as is done in the case of the genuine cutting feat. The left hand rests upon the hip, a recognized broadsword position. Drawing back the sword for a moment, as if to get greater swing, he makes a horizontal outward slash with it. The spectators naturally expect to see the flag fall to the ground in two portions, but it has disappeared altogether. Where has it gone? The performer himself professes ignorance, but a moment later, on turning his back, it is seen hanging down in three pieces from under his coat-collar. Removing these, he rolls them up and hands them to a lady to hold. On her again unfolding them the colours have recombined, but in a new form, the flag being now the Union Jack. The performer hears, or pretends to hear, a remark that it is rather small. He retorts that the feat is all the greater, it being no easy matter to make the British flag look small; but in any case the defect can be easily remedied. He rolls the small flag between his hands. When it is again spread out, it is still the Union Jack, but now of imposing dimensions, measuring twenty-six inches by thirty.

The sword is unprepared, save that a little notch is filed in the guard in such a position as to be easily covered with the thumb. The object of this will presently appear. The disappearance of the handkerchief is effected by means of a pull, but arranged after a special fashion. It consists of a black silk cord, passing up the right sleeve, and terminating, at the wrist end, in a swivel like that of a watch-chain. To keep this in position till wanted, a loop of fine string is engaged in the swivel and passed over the wrist-stud. Before the performer brings forward the sword, this

loop is removed and the swivel is slipped into the little notch in the guard, before mentioned, where it is secured by the pressure of the thumb.

From the armpit the cord passes behind the back and through a metal ring, one and one half inches in diameter, attached to the central point of the performer's suspenders, and thence down the back, terminating in a small cylindrical weight, which rests at the outset in a hip pocket, opening vertically in the trousers on the left side.

Midway in one of the longer sides of the flag a little ring is sewn, and when the handkerchief is laid on the sword-blade this is slipped into the swivel-hook, thereby making the necessary connection.

When the performer places his hand on the hip he gets hold of the weight, takes it out of the pocket, and lets it temporarily hang loose, in which condition it works freely up and down, allowing the performer perfect liberty of action and enabling him to draw the flag, even after it has been attached to the pull, along the blade as far as the centre, proving, apparently, that it is not attached in any way. When he desires to "vanish" the flag, he gets hold of the weight again (hand still on hip) and as he makes his slash with the sword, gives the cord a smart pull, when the flag flies up the sleeve, resting in the centre of the back. The weight is then dropped into the pochette on the same side.

The three strips of silk which are to appear on the performer's back are laid one upon another. The corners of one end of the combined strip are turned down so as to diminish its width, and in that condition the end, to the extent of an inch, is tucked under a

three-inch length of black elastic, sewn horizontally under the coat-collar. The remaining portion of the silk is then rolled up and made to rest under the collar. When the performer, having "vanished" the flag, hands the sword for examination, he grasps the lapels of his coat with both hands, as if merely resettling it, thereby lifting the collar and allowing the loose ends to stream down his back, whence, with a jerk, he afterwards dislodges them.

The rest of the trick is on comparatively familiar lines, though there are one or two little points of detail which are worthy of attention. The small Union Jack is twisted loosely ropewise, and then coiled tightly round the finger, the outer end being tucked into the centre. (Arranged after this fashion, the mere act of rolling it between the hands causes it to unfold instantly.) Thus prepared, the flag is placed inside the vest, on the left side. The large Union Jack is made into a sort of "bun" by rolling the corners towards the centre, and is also placed inside the vest, but in the middle.

When the performer gets down the strips from his back he holds them before him, breast-high, and under cover of these has no difficulty in getting the small flag from the vest into the right hand. Folding up the strips into as small a compass as possible, he shows both packets as one, in the same hand, the flag being the nearer to the finger-tips. This he hands to the lady, requesting her to rub it lightly. By way of illustrating his meaning, he makes the movement of rubbing the fingers of the right hand on the left, this movement masking the presence of the strips, still in his hand. In returning to the stage, these are dropped into a hip pocket.

The large flag is got into the hands under cover of exhibiting the small flag held in front of the body. The two are then rolled together, the small one being packed into a small compass and palmed off, while the large one is exhibited in its place.

CHAPTER IX.

TRICKS WITH GLOVES.

"VANISHING" THE GLOVES.

THE glove is hardly so good a friend to the conjurer as the handkerchief, but it nevertheless lends itself to two or three very pretty illusions. The "vanishing" of the performer's own gloves, in a casual way, before commencing his entertainment proper, is a very old trick, but is still popular, as forming an easy and natural introductory item.

One method of working the trick is described in *Modern Magic* (page 325). The first glove was in that case got rid of by an elastic pull, attached to it beforehand; and the second by palming. This second glove may be neatly got rid of by professedly melting it into the flame of a candle. The secret here lies in the construction of the candlestick, the stem of which, for about five inches of its own height, is a straight hollow tube. In one side of this, near the bottom, is an oval opening about two and a half inches high, which, however, may be closed at pleasure by means of an outer tube, which slides up and down over the inner one. This at the outset is raised, leaving the hole, which is turned away from the spectator, open. When the performer has taken off the glove, he rolls it up small into

a cylindrical shape, and in making believe to transfer it from the right hand to the left, palms it in the former hand by clipping it against the lower joints of the fingers.

Advancing to the candlestick, he picks this up with the same hand, in so doing introducing the glove into the opening. Then, holding the left hand over the flame, he makes a rubbing motion therewith, presently showing the hand empty, the glove having ostensibly passed down the flame into the candle. In the act of replacing the candlestick on the table, the right hand presses down the sliding tube; after which the candlestick (which is not thereby perceptibly altered in appearance) can be shown on all sides without disclosing its secret.

Again, for the first glove; in place of the self-acting rubber pull a cord pull may be used. The advantage of this arrangement is that the glove need not be attached to the pull beforehand, and so can be passed from hand to hand at pleasure, before it is ultimately vanished. The pull, which terminates at its outer end in a long loop of fine but strong silk, passed over the second or third finger of the left hand, travels up the sleeve, across the back, and is formed at the opposite end into a somewhat smaller loop, which is hitched over one of the front brace-buttons on the right side. At the proper moment the performer passes the glove midway through the left-hand loop, and doubles it in half. While by means of his patter he calls attention to the glove, he slips the thumb of the right hand into the opposite loop, and disengages it from the button. A moment later, while kneading the glove with the fingers of the left hand, he draws it up the sleeve.

THE GLOVE PASSED INTO THE WAND.

This is a novel and effective method of vanishing a glove, but a certain amount of address is needed to perform it neatly.

The left-hand glove is attached to a rubber pull passing through a hem round the wrist as described in *Modern Magic*, so as to draw it, when removed from the hand, into as small a compass as possible. The performer, having taken off the glove, hesitates for a moment as to what he shall do with it. He finally decides to pass it into his wand, and asks whether he shall do so visibly or invisibly. Spectators invariably make the same reply to this question. The answer is always "visibly"; but if by any chance it should be "invisibly" the procedure would be just the same. The disappearance of anything is always invisible when it comes to the point.

The performer, holding the glove, by the wrist portion, in the left hand, transfers the wand to the same hand, grasping it by about the middle, and with the right hand twists the glove *loosely* around it. The fingers of the left hand are then advanced a little farther up the wand, so that the forefinger and thumb shall be a little beyond the glove, though the latter is still visible. The right hand now advances, and seizing the upper end of the wand, draws it through the glove, not too rapidly, at the same time turning it slightly from right to left. This movement tends to throw the glove back into a straight line, and the pressure of the left hand being at the same time relaxed, the glove flies up the sleeve.

In this, as indeed in all tricks of the kind, the per-

former must take special care that his wristbands are not of a size or shape to impede the passage of the glove. It will be found a good plan to dust this latter beforehand lightly with French chalk. A glove so treated flies up the sleeve with the minimum of friction.

The following very effective glove trick, which I borrow from a German source, is the invention of a wizard whom I have already had occasion to mention, the Chevalier Francis King.

A WHITE GLOVE CHANGED TO A BLACK ONE.

The effect of the trick is as follows:

The performer advances wearing a white glove on his left hand and carrying a second in his right. While making his opening remarks, he lays this latter upon the table and proceeds to remove the other from the hand. This he vanishes, either by sleight-of-hand or by means of a pull. He then turns his attention to the glove on the table. What shall he do with it? He decides to turn it into a black one. Picking it up, he rubs it between his hands, and it turns black accordingly. He holds up the glove, expectant of applause, but discovers from the laughter of the audience that something has gone wrong. Glancing at the glove, he perceives that one finger has somehow escaped the colouring process and remains white. He pretends confusion, and stammers out some feeble sort of apology—he did n't count that finger, or something of that sort. In an absent-minded sort of way he folds up the glove, as if ashamed of his mistake and desirous of hiding the faulty finger, but suddenly bethinks himself that after all there is no

harm done. A touch of the magic wand will set matters right. He touches the glove with the wand accordingly, and on again unfolding the glove, the odd finger is found to be black, like the rest.

Another "cure," which may be substituted for the use of the wand, is to rub the folded glove against his own or somebody else's black coat sleeve.

The secret lies in the fact that the glove used is in reality *two* gloves, a white and a black one, sewn wrist to wrist. Over one of the fingers of the latter, a finger, cut from a third white glove, is passed, and in this condition the black glove is tucked into the white one. In laying this on the table, the performer takes care to place it with the finger ends towards the spectators.

The reader, being let into the secret of this preliminary preparation, will need little further explanation as to the working of the trick. When the performer desires to turn the white glove into a black one, he simply reverses them, bringing the black glove outside and working the white one into it. In folding up the black glove, after the supposed mistake, it is an easy matter to draw off the white finger, which also is presently tucked inside the black glove, and the thing is done.

In another version of the trick (also Francis King's) the black glove used has really one white finger, but this is covered at the outset by a spare black one. Having transformed the white finger into a black one, the performer bethinks himself that a black glove is useless to him, as he never wears black gloves. What is to be done? The best plan will be to turn it white again; and this time he will do it a little bit at a time, so that

the spectators may see clearly "how it's done." To begin with, he accordingly turns one finger white (by withdrawing the black over-finger), and then proceeds to turn the whole glove white, by working the black glove back into the white one as already mentioned.

The illusion next described is of the same class, but rather more elaborate. This also is derived from a Teutonic source, being the invention of Herr Hans Meckel. His description of the trick, as given in the German magical serial, *Die Zauberwelt*,¹ is so lucid and complete that I cannot do better than quote it at length, reserving the liberty of somewhat free translation. He entitles it *Die Handschuhfarberei*, which we may amplify in English into

GLOVE-DYEING BY MAGIC.

The requirements for the performance of this trick (apart from the gloves to be "dyed") are as under:

1. A table, with net servante behind it.
2. The magic wand.
3. An empty tumbler.
4. A tall hat.
5. A double handkerchief, with circular disc for vanishing the tumbler.
6. A glove, the fingers of which are white, while the remainder is black.
7. A glove, the fingers of which are black, while the remainder is white.
8. A cigar-box, from which one side has been removed.
9. A piece of cartridge paper about eight inches by five.

¹ Vol. v., p. 42.

10. A changing tube (as described at page 260, *supra*).

11. A black glove.

The table stands from the outset of the performance in readiness upon the stage, and the various articles above specified are placed upon it. The cigar-box is turned with its open side away from the spectators, and behind it lies the changing tube, loaded with the black glove. The piece of cartridge paper is laid upon the cigar-box, in such manner that one of its ends may project over the back, and so mask the presence of the changing tube. The net servante is attached behind the right-hand side of the table (as viewed by the spectators) and on the table, just above it, lies the magic wand. The glass stands at the opposite end of the table; and close to it lies the prepared handkerchief.

In the hat, which may either be already standing on the table or be brought in by the performer, are the two parti-coloured gloves. Or a borrowed hat may be used, these being loaded into it during the return to the table. The performer comes forward, wearing white gloves, and offers a few introductory remarks, making a special point of the fact that the tricks he is about to exhibit will be executed entirely without the aid of apparatus.

"The feats I am about to show you, ladies and gentlemen, depend more or less upon sleight-of-hand, as to which you will shortly be able to judge the measure of my skill. Naturally, to keep my gloves on would handicap me considerably, so with your permission I will take them off. In every-day life, when a man takes his gloves off he just lays them on one side or puts them in his pocket, but a conjurer does better; he throws them up in the air and dematerializes them."

At this point, having taken off the right-hand glove, he places it apparently in the left hand (really palming it in the right). Making believe to throw it up to the ceiling, he opens the left hand and shows it empty, immediately afterwards producing the glove with the right from under the left arm, or elsewhere, as it takes his fancy. He then drops it into the hat, but changes his mind, and with the remark, "But perhaps you would like to keep it in view," or some words to the same effect, with the right hand takes it out and lays it, fingers outwards, hanging over the brim. As a matter of fact, the glove he thus displays is not the one he dropped in, but the black glove with the white fingers; which, from the position of the glove, are alone visible to the spectators.

"White gloves are suitable for festive seasons, but there are occasions in life when even a conjurer must wear black ones. Fortunately, any respectable wizard has a short and easy way of supplying himself with the needful. He just takes his white gloves and dyes them black. How does he manage it, you ask? It is quite simple, ladies and gentlemen." (He has by this time taken off the remaining glove.) "He just takes a plain piece of paper, like this, forms it into a tube, and passes the glove through it."

As he speaks, he picks up the piece of paper with the changing tube behind it, forms it into a cylinder with the tube inside, and with the aid of his wand pushes down into it the white glove he has just taken off, thereby forcing out the black glove at the opposite end. He pulls this completely out, lays it on the table, opens out the paper cylinder, meanwhile taking the tube in the right hand, smoothes out the paper, and lays it

down as at first on the cigar-box, in so doing, passing the tube through the open back into the padded interior of the box.

"We have now one white and one black glove." He drops the black glove just produced into the hat, but again bethinking himself, says, "No, that won't do," and dipping his hand into the hat, as if to take it out again, takes hold instead of the white glove with the black fingers, and lays this beside the other across the brim of the hat, in such manner that the black portion only is seen by the spectators.

"All we have to do now is to dye the second glove black like the other, and to prove to you that I do so without any external aid, I will hold the two gloves apart from each other, one in each hand."

He takes the two parti-coloured gloves accordingly, but takes care so to hold them that the black portion of the white-fingered glove (held in the left hand) and the white portion of the black-fingered glove (held in the right hand) shall be completely covered. To all appearance, therefore, he is exhibiting a black and a white glove, or strictly speaking, one half of each; he then rolls them together between the hands; at the same time gravely pronouncing some mystic formula, which occasions a laugh among the spectators. "If you interrupt me, ladies and gentlemen, you can't expect me to produce satisfactory results. If *you* laugh, you make *me* laugh; and then my work is likely to be only half done. As I feared; that is just what has happened." (He spreads out the gloves.) "You see, half black, half white. I might wear them at the next carnival, certainly, but they are of no use for anything else. If I kept on in the same way, I might perhaps

turn them into a shepherd's plaid pattern. Stop a bit, though, I think I see a way out of the difficulty. I will wash them, and then it is to be hoped they may return to their original colour. Unfortunately I have no conveniences for washing, no water, in fact no anything. Never mind, for lack of water I will try air."

Here he places both gloves in the tumbler, throwing the faked handkerchief over it; picks up the glass inside the handkerchief, and lets it fall with its contents into the net, the handkerchief remaining distended between his fingers by reason of the disc in its centre. The spectators naturally believe that he is still holding the glass within the handkerchief. "How I am to set the air to work for my washing operation is not quite clear to me. I will try the experiment of blowing against the glass. Probably the supply of air will be insufficient for my purpose, but I can try." (He expands his cheeks and blows against the handkerchief.) "Hallo! How is this?"

He picks up, with the left hand, one corner of the handkerchief, peeps underneath it, and shakes it out, when it is seen to be empty. "I suppose I must have blown too hard. The gloves could not bear even so mild a draught of air as that. This will be a lesson to me never to exhibit novelties in public again without having tested their effect beforehand. So far as I can see, the glass and its contents have melted into thin air. I advise all mothers of families to take warning from my fate; to eschew the air-cleansing process and to stick to the old way of washing. If I had done so, I should still be in possession of my gloves; but as they have so completely disappeared, I must make up my mind to the loss. My hands, at any rate, are all the freer with-

out them, and I will avail myself of this greater freedom to give you a few more specimens of my dexterity."

THE DAMAGED GLOVE AND LADY'S STOCKING.

This is another variation of the glove trick. The performer appears with one glove on, the other in his right hand. With the latter he makes a movement towards the ceiling, and the glove vanishes, being drawn up the sleeve by a rubber pull. He then proceeds to take off the other glove, but it appears to be a very tight fit. When he has got it nearly off he gives a vigorous pull, but his success is now *too* complete. The glove has come off, but the thumb and a portion of the adjoining material remain on the hand. He looks ruefully at the damage, makes some remark about never being able to get a glove to fit him, and so on, and then vanishes the damaged article (this time by using the sleight-of-hand method). The severed "thumb" still remains on his hand. He turns it this way and that, eyeing it with a disgusted expression, and finally says: "Well, it 's no good as it is, I must see what I can make of it. Perhaps there may be kid enough for a smaller glove."

No sooner said than done. He rolls the scrap of kid between his hands, and a moment later shows it transformed into a complete though miniature glove, his hands being otherwise empty. "That is a little better," he remarks, turning it about to show it, "but it is too small for anybody but a baby to wear. I must see if I can't stretch it a bit, and make it large enough for a lady." He begins to pull, and the glove to lengthen in his hands. Still longer and longer he stretches it. The

spectators begin to realize that the fabric as well as the shape has somehow altered; and presently it reveals itself at full length as a lady's stocking, the glove having entirely disappeared. The stocking is now either got rid of by one or other of the methods given for vanishing a handkerchief, or is retained for use in some other trick.¹

The reader will doubtless have guessed the greater part of the secret. The glove used has the thumb portion cut out, along the usual line of stitching. Round the edges of the portion thus cut out is sewn a strip, half an inch wide, of similar kid, forming a sort of margin. (A simpler plan, where cost is not a material consideration, is to cut a second thumb, with the necessary margin complete, out of another glove.) If now the thumb be first put on, and the mutilated glove over it, there will be nothing to call attention to the fact that they are already separate; and when the performer takes the glove off the spectators naturally take for granted that he has torn it in doing so. The "baby" glove is packed inside the thumb; just at the fork, where it will not occasion any noticeable bulge.

When the thumb is taken off, this latter is folded up small and tucked inside the baby glove, which is exhibited in its place. While this is held up, in the one hand, the other gets possession of the previously vested silk stocking. This has a little pocket, of the same colour and material, just inside the opening at top, and when the stocking is exhibited, the miniature glove and its contents are slipped into this pocket; where they may remain, unless the performer proposes, as

¹ E. g., for the watch trick described at p. 195 of *More Magic*.

above suggested, to utilize the stocking for the purpose of some other trick, in which case he must get them out again as best he can. With a little ingenuity he will easily find an opportunity for doing so.

A GLOVE CONJURED INTO A NUT, THE NUT INTO AN EGG,
THE EGG INTO A LEMON, AND THE
LEMON INTO AN ORANGE.

This is a very old trick, but has recently been reintroduced, in a slightly altered form, as a novelty. As illustrating the wide divergence between old methods and new, it may be interesting, before proceeding to describe the modern method, to give a translation of the instructions given by Ponsin, writing in 1858, for the original version. It will be observed that the draped table with an assistant under it, the *bûte à compère* condemned by Robert-Houdin, was then still in use, and played an important part in the illusion. Ponsin, by the way, adds a ring to the articles used in the trick.

“Effect. A ring and a glove are borrowed, and placed in a little box. An orange, a lemon, an egg, and a nut are offered for examination. The glove and ring vanish invisibly from the box. The lemon, the egg, and the nut, which had been placed under a cover¹ on the table, disappear, and the whole are found in the orange, which the performer is holding in his hand.

“Explanation. The little box in which the glove and ring are deposited is placed on a trap in the table-top and covered over. An assistant, concealed within the

¹ A metal cover, in the shape of a truncated cone, is here referred to.

table, takes it, removes the glove and the ring, and replaces it as before. He quickly places the ring in a nut previously prepared for that purpose, inserts the nut in one of the fingers of the glove, and the glove in an egg, which is itself enclosed in a lemon, and the lemon in an orange, after a fashion which will be explained later.

"In order to allow the assistant time for these operations, an orange, a lemon, an egg, and a nut are meanwhile offered for inspection. This done, stepping up to the table, you uncover and lay aside the little box (professedly still containing the glove and ring), putting in its place and covering over the lemon, egg, and nut, but retaining the orange. While you are employed in placing these three articles on the trap, the assistant exchanges, for the orange you hold, the prepared one containing the enclosures above referred to.

"When the exchange has been effected, the assistant opens the trap and lets the unprepared lemon, egg, and nut drop out of sight. The performer meanwhile takes the little box, announcing that he will show a pretty trick with the glove and ring which it contains, but on opening the box he finds, to his pretended surprise, that it is empty. He lifts the cover over the trap, and makes believe to be still more astonished at finding nothing there. He seeks for the missing articles, remarking at last, 'Let us see, perhaps some rival wizard has played me a trick, and passed them into the orange.' He cuts this open, and shows the lemon, which he takes out of the orange; he then cuts open the lemon, and exposes the egg. He breaks this, pulls out the glove, and lastly finds the nut in the glove. He breaks the nut, and produces the ring, which is identified by the person who lent it."

The preliminary preparations are described by Ponsin as follows:

"You take an orange, and cut out of it about a fifth part, and through the opening thus made, clear out the pulp by the aid of a teaspoon. A lemon is emptied in the same way, and inserted inside the orange. Inside the lemon is an egg, inserted while full to avoid breakage, but emptied afterwards. The assistant has the orange, thus prepared, in readiness. When he gets possession of the box containing the glove and the ring, he inserts the latter into an empty walnut-shell, joining the shell together again by means of wax smeared over the edges. He pokes the nut, thus treated, into one of the fingers of the glove, and the glove into the egg. He must use due care, in exchanging the oranges, to offer the prepared one in such manner that the open side shall rest against the palm of the conjurer; so that, the opening being unseen, the orange may appear to the spectators to be unprepared."

This is a fair example of what in its day was regarded as a first-class trick. To the modern conjurer it would seem a painfully clumsy affair, though it is possible that, in good hands, the address of the performer may have made it effective. We now proceed to the more up-to-date method.

In the modern version the orange, etc., are somewhat differently prepared. A segment is not cut out of the orange, as described by Ponsin, but two cuts are made in the rind at right angles to each other, and the peel turned back at the point of intersection. The length of the cuts is regulated by the size of the lemon to be introduced, and the pulp is removed through the opening thus made. The lemon is prepared in the same

way. The egg, introduced into the latter endwise, and while still full, after Ponsin's method, may then be emptied through an opening made for that purpose in the exposed end, and an unprepared walnut inserted therein. The cut portion of the lemon rind is then folded down to its original condition, and secured by one or two stitches with lemon-coloured cotton. This is then loaded into the orange, which is restored to its original appearance in the same way. The orange thus prepared should be placed on a servante behind a small round table. This is covered with black velvet, and is provided with a pocket of the same material, as described at page 89.

The performer must also provide himself with an unprepared orange, lemon, egg, and nut of similar appearance. These are exhibited openly on a tray upon his table. He should also have a little packet of flash paper, enclosing a very small quantity of gun-cotton, rolled up and vested. This should correspond in size and appearance with the parcel a lady's glove would make, if rolled as small as possible and wrapped up in the same way.

The egg, it should be mentioned, is shown in a nickel-plated egg-cup. This, though in appearance innocence itself, is in fact the mechanical egg-cup with reversible half-shell, familiar to most conjurers.¹ The latter item (the half-shell) is vested on the opposite side to that on which the flash-paper packet is placed.

A lady's white kid glove having been borrowed, it is rolled up and wrapped in a piece of paper in such manner that the packet shall correspond in appearance with the flash-paper roll. It is then deftly "changed".

¹ See *post*, in the chapter dealing with Egg Tricks.

for the latter, which is given to one of the spectators to hold, while the packet really containing the glove is passed off to the assistant by one or other of the methods already described, or in any other way that the performer may find convenient. For instance, he may rebuke his assistant for having left the candle on the table unlighted, and call for a match in order to remedy the omission. A box of matches being brought to him, he takes out a match and lights the candle. The box is handed back, still open, to the assistant, the little packet having been meanwhile pushed into the open end. The assistant closes the box; thereby pushing the little packet out into his hand, and carries both off together. Behind the scenes he inserts the glove, without the paper, into an empty walnut-shell, the edges of which have been slightly smeared with shoemaker's wax, so that the half-shells adhere by mere pressure.

A further problem now presents itself, viz., how to pass this shell into the hands of the performer. Various ways of doing this might be suggested. For instance, the performer may accidentally (?) drop the egg he has just been showing on the tray, and smash it; or it may suddenly strike him, upon sniffing critically at the egg, that it is not quite fresh, whereas, for the purpose of his experiment, an absolutely new-laid egg is necessary. In either case he has a sufficient pretext for calling for another egg. This is brought by the assistant on a plate or small tray, held in the left hand. When he nears the performer, he picks up the egg with the right hand, in which he has the nut palmed, and offers them both together.¹ The egg alone is shown, the nut being

¹ This passing of two articles while professedly handing one only is a very useful expedient, but needs some amount of preliminary practice in order to execute it with perfect success.

vested, or temporarily dropped into a pochette. The egg is exhibited on all sides, and then ostensibly placed in the egg-cup. In doing this, however, the performer deftly substitutes the half-shell, and drops the complete egg, which should be either hard-boiled or of celluloid, into his *profonde*.

Where a pistol is used in the final stage of the trick (which is one of the easiest methods of working it), the nut may be brought in by the assistant with the weapon, and lie behind it on the table till wanted.

Having thus got matters in train, the performer explains that he is about to attempt a very difficult feat. He proposes to pass the glove into the nut, the nut into the egg, the egg into the lemon, and so on. As a first step, he invites the person having charge of the little packet, professedly containing the glove, to warm it a little by holding it over the candle. As soon as it touches the flame it flashes off, and disappears. The performer explains that he had not intended it to be held quite so near; but there is no great harm done; the glove has merely passed into the candle. This however will necessitate a little alteration in his intentions. He will now be compelled to pass the nut too into the candle, to look for the glove. He accordingly does so, ostensibly placing the (unprepared) nut in the left hand and rubbing it away over the candle flame, while the right hand drops it into the *profonde*. The egg he may as well serve the same way. Accordingly he picks up the egg-cup in the left hand, and, holding it in a slanting position over the candle-flame, rubs the egg gently with the fingers of the right hand. Under cover of the rubbing the half-shell is reversed, and hands and egg-cup are alike shown empty.

The orange and lemon are now alone left. The performer considers the possibility of passing the latter also into the candle, but decides that it is rather too large, and that he had better pass it into the orange. Picking up the lemon and the orange together in the right hand, he advances to the small velvet-covered table, but before placing them on it, moves this a foot or two nearer the centre of the stage. This he does by gripping the table-top with the left hand in front, and the right hand behind, under which conditions it is a very easy matter to exchange the unprepared orange for the one on the servante. This and the lemon are then placed on the table, one on each side of the pocket therein. The performer, standing behind the table, and drawing back his sleeves to show all fair, picks them up between his hands and rubs them together, or rather, that is what he appears to do. As a matter of fact, when the hands are brought together on the table, the hand with the lemon travels a little faster than the opposite hand, and the lemon, instead of being picked up with the orange, actually goes "down trap." The orange is rolled between the hands for a moment or two, the performer meanwhile moving away from the table, and it is then shown that the lemon has disappeared, having apparently passed into the orange.

The final stage is to pass the glove, nut, and egg, professedly now all in the candle, into the combined fruit. If the pistol be not used, this may ostensibly be done by merely revolving the orange a few times over the candle-flame, but this is scarcely an artistic method. The use of the pistol adds greatly to the effect of the trick, the performer standing at one side of the stage, with the orange on a table at the other, and the

candle in a straight line between. In either case, as soon as the articles are supposed to have "passed," the performer picks up the orange, and with a sharp knife cuts enough of the rind to expose the lemon. This he next cuts in like manner, and produces the egg. He takes out this in such manner as not to show the open end, and at once breaks the shell, when its preparation can no longer be detected.¹ Thence he produces the nut therein contained, for which the prepared one is then deftly substituted; and this being broken, the trick is done. The performer may score an additional point by gravely bringing forward the candle, that any one who wishes may satisfy himself that it no longer contains either glove, nut, or egg.

I have described this illusion at somewhat disproportionate length, but it is one which is susceptible of many variations (*e. g.*, a borrowed ring or bank-note may be substituted for the glove), and it has the further merit of practically illustrating sundry processes and expedients whose usefulness is by no means limited to the particular trick under consideration.

DR. AVON'S GLOVE TRICK.²

This is a very elaborate trick, but will be found effective by those who do not mind the trouble of the necessary preparation.

¹ A more realistic method is to use a raw egg, unbroken. At the close of the trick, this is broken into a tumbler, and the prepared walnut, held in the same hand, is allowed to drop therein. If the performer breaks the egg on the edge of the tumbler *remote from himself*, this becomes an easy matter, as the hand is in that case brought over the tumbler. The necessary wiping of the nut before it can be further dealt with only adds to the effect of the trick.

² *Die Zauberwelt*, Vol. iii., p. 166.

The following are the requirements for the feat:

1. A pair of ordinary white kid gloves.
2. A single glove (A) specially prepared.
3. A single glove (B) also specially prepared.
4. A white kid glove, child's size.
5. A sand-frame. This is the familiar frame used for producing or vanishing a playing card.
(See *More Magic*, page 102.)
6. A lighted candle.
7. A glass tumbler.
8. The "smoke" apparatus, described at page 56.
9. Pull in left sleeve, with loop at end.

The preparation of the two gloves is somewhat exceptional, and will require some care. A is a glove from which two fingers have been torn off, and which is damaged in other particulars. In each of the two remaining fingers is concealed a short piece of rubber tube, secured at each end, and filled with milk. The rubber has been punctured in one or two places, near the finger-tip end, with a sharp penknife, and the glove fingers have likewise been cut at the tips to correspond. If the holes have been properly made in the rubber, no liquid will escape, save under pressure. The glove thus prepared is rolled up in a small compass, and placed on the servante.

The second glove, B, is in still worse condition, nothing being left of it save one finger and a strip of the back or palm. In the finger is a rubber tube filled with milk, and otherwise prepared as above mentioned. This hangs, by a thread that can be easily broken, inside the front of the performer's coat on the left side. The child's glove is placed inside the sand-frame, which

is so turned that the sand shall run down between the glasses and the frame appear empty. The smoke apparatus is duly arranged on the person of the performer, the outlet tube lying just inside his right sleeve.

The performer comes forward wearing the unprepared gloves, and introduces the trick as follows:

"It is almost a matter of course for a conjurer, in good society, to begin by 'vanishing' his gloves. I propose to follow the fashion, but after a manner of my own. I shall rely, not on rapidity of movement, but on one of the forces of nature, namely, *Heat*. As you are aware, ladies and gentlemen, there are three states or conditions of matter: the solid, the fluid, and the gaseous, according to the temperature to which it is exposed. We have a familiar example in water, which appears in a solid form as ice, or in vapour as steam. Now, I have discovered that the same thing applies to many other substances, far more so indeed than anybody has hitherto suspected. I will illustrate the principle with these gloves of mine. I leave you to choose which of them I shall use for my experiment."

The performer takes off both gloves, and hands them for examination, letting it be clearly seen that they are quite unprepared. When one has been chosen, he takes it with his right hand, and places it in his left, really inserting it within the loop of the pull and getting rid of it by that means up the sleeve, though the hand closes as if still containing it. He then, with the right hand, picks up his wand, and with it the prepared glove A, which has been so placed as to enable him to do this. He then makes believe to return the glove first shown, and believed to be in the left hand, to the right, which he moves about over the lighted candle, professedly to

"melt" the glove. After a sufficient interval he picks up the tumbler, and, holding his hand over it, squeezes the glove (A). The rubber tubes yield up their contents, which drip into the glass. When squeezed dry, he exhibits the mutilated glove, remarking that some part at any rate of it is completely melted, as may be seen by the portions missing.

Using both hands, he rolls A into a smaller compass, then making a quarter turn to the left, he gets B secretly into his left hand. He makes believe to pass A into the left hand, but really palms it in the right, and in the act of picking up the candlestick with the right hand, gets rid of it on the servante. He now holds the left hand over the lighted candle, and, after having warmed it sufficiently, takes up the tumbler, and squeezes the contents of B into it. This done, he opens the hand, and shows that the unfortunate glove has lost a further portion of its substance. In pulling it apart it should be an easy matter to extract the piece of rubber tube from the finger, after which the remains may be handed for closer inspection.

While general attention is thus attracted to the damaged glove, the performer gets down the end of the smoke tube into his right hand. Taking back the glove with the left hand, he apparently transfers it to his right, getting rid of it a moment later, in the act of picking up the wand or candlestick.

Again he holds the right hand over the candle, remarking that as so much of the glove has already reached the fluid state, the remainder cannot be very far from the gaseous condition; and the spectators are invited to watch narrowly for this transformation. While they are thus watching the right hand, the left

sinks to the side and presses the air-ball of the smoke apparatus, when dense white fumes stream from the fingers of the right hand, representing the last atoms of the glove in a state of combustion. The straightening of the arm draws the tube back into the sleeve, when the right hand may be shown empty.

In the trick as described by Dr. Avon, the miniature glove (professedly the original restored, but diminished in size by evaporation) is caused to appear in the sand-frame, previously seen empty; but this is of course only one of many possible conclusions.

CHAPTER X.

TRICKS WITH EGGS.

THE most practical advance in this direction lies in the introduction of the celluloid egg. There are many tricks in which the use of the natural egg is undesirable. For palming purposes its weight is an objection, and, unless hard-boiled, its fragility lays the performer always more or less open to a possible catastrophe. The blown egg is still more fragile, though this difficulty may be to some extent got over by coating the interior with a plaster cement. Imitation eggs of wood, metal, and rubber have been tried, but none of them looked quite like the real thing, and they had the further drawback of soiling very quickly.

At last, however, some one hit on the happy thought of employing celluloid,¹ and the problem was solved. Eggs made of this material are undistinguishable by sight from the real article. They are much stronger than the natural egg, while their lightness enables even a novice to palm them with perfect ease. They are manufactured with an unbroken surface, in imitation of the natural egg, and also hollow, with an opening at the side or end, for use in handkerchief tricks. The last mentioned pattern (see Fig. 169) is a comparative

¹ Messrs. Hamley use both for eggs and billiard-balls a special form of celluloid, called "ivorine," which gives exceptionally good results.

novelty. Each has its recommendations, according to the purpose for which it is employed. The reader will



FIG. 169.

find indicated in the following pages frequent opportunities for the use of each kind. First, however, I will describe two methods of "faking" a natural egg, for the purpose of a very effective little trick.

THE SELF-BALANCING EGG.

Into a blown egg insert a small teaspoonful of shot, with a like quantity of melted paraffin wax. Stop the two holes with a mixture of coaguline and levigated lime, and place the egg, while the paraffin cools, point upwards, so that the contents may settle down and solidify at its broader end. When it is cold, the stoppings of the two holes may be smoothed over with a small file, and if neatly finished off will be practically invisible. An egg thus prepared will stand upright on its broader end, and even if laid down, will immediately resume its former position. It may even be balanced upright on the end of the magician's wand, with very curious effect.

Another, and in some respects better, plan is to fill the egg, to the extent of one third of its capacity, with fine sand, in place of the shot and paraffin, closing the ends as above described. The egg in this case is

not limited to the perpendicular, but remains pretty nearly in any position in which it may be placed, the loose sand naturally settling down into the portion which may be lowest for the time being.

It is hardly necessary to remark that the egg should not be introduced point-blank as having this peculiar property, but should be deftly substituted for another which in the course of some previous trick has been casually submitted to examination, or as to which the audience have in some other way been satisfied that it has "no preparation."

THE EGG-CUP, FOR VANISHING AN EGG.¹

This little piece of apparatus is of considerable antiquity, and no expert at the present day would think

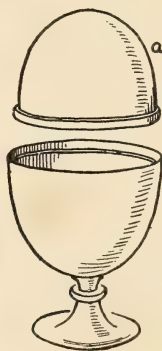


FIG. 170.

of exhibiting it as an independent trick. In combination with other elements, however, it may still be

¹ One mode of using this egg-cup has been already indicated in connection with the glove trick described at page 378, but it merits a special mention in connection with egg tricks generally.

made very useful. For the benefit of readers who may not have made its acquaintance, I will briefly describe it.

In appearance it is simply a handsome nickel-plated egg-cup, such as would do credit to anybody's breakfast table. (See Fig. 170.) Close examination, however, reveals a little peculiarity, in the shape of a rebate all round the inner edge of the cup. Into this fits the rim of a half-shell, *a*, also of metal, but enamelled on the outside in exact imitation of an egg. The two parts of the apparatus are so adjusted in point of size that this half-shell exactly fits the cup either way up. If inserted with the convex side upwards, the effect to the spectator is that there is an egg in the cup. If turned the other way up, the convex side of the shell adapts itself to the concavity of the egg-cup, and the latter appears empty. Indeed, in such condition it is available for the reception of an actual egg. The interior of the half-shell, like that of the cup itself, is of polished metal.

When the sham egg is in position, an expert performer can, by merely passing his hand over it, reverse it in the cup, leaving the latter apparently empty. To do this, the first step is to show a complete egg (real or imitation), and to place it apparently in the cup, actually substituting the half-shell. Taking the cup by its foot in the left hand, the performer encircles the supposed egg with the fingers of the right, as if to lift it out of the cup, but, as a matter of fact, under cover of the fingers, turns the shell over with the thumb. The right hand moves away as if containing the egg, and is in due course shown empty.

AN IMPROVED EGG-HOLDER.

This is another of the ingenious aids to deception for which magic is indebted to Herr Willmann.

Its object is to transform a silk handkerchief into an egg, which in this case may be not merely a conjurer's make-believe, but the genuine production of the hen. In shape the fake follows the lines of the egg-cup of ordinary life, but with the foot cut off half an inch

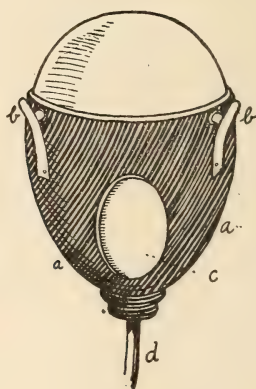


FIG. 171.

below the bowl. In appearance it is as represented in Fig. 171. Round the mouth of the cup *a a* are three small holes, as *b b*, through which pass from the outside three studs or pegs, attached to steel springs which normally press them inward. An egg being introduced, smaller end foremost, into the holder, the pressure of these three studs holds it safely in the cup, even when the latter is held mouth downwards. In the lower half of the holder is an oval opening, *c*, about an inch in longest diameter. At its extreme lower end

is a cup-shaped boss, hollowed out to receive the knot of a piece of rubber cord, *d*. The opposite end of this cord, which is about half a yard in length, is passed inside the vest through the left arm-hole, and secured to one of the brace-buttons on the opposite side, in such manner that the holder shall hang, covered by the coat, about level with the vest pocket on the left side.

The manner of its use is, broadly speaking, as follows: The performer, exhibiting a silk handkerchief

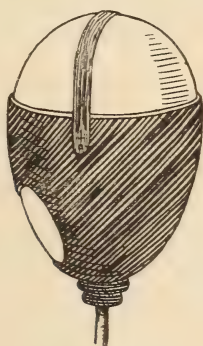


FIG. 172.

in his right hand, makes a half-turn to the left, as if to give a better view to the spectators on that side. While his left side is thus screened, he gets the fake into the left hand, and then, bringing the hands together, works the handkerchief into the opening *c*, thereby forcing out the egg into the hands, the handkerchief taking its place at the bottom of the cup, which is then allowed to fly back to its original position.

The egg-holder above described is a very ingenious

and finished contrivance, but it seems to me that the same object might be effected equally well, and more simply, by suppressing the three studs and the springs to which they are attached, and fixing across the mouth of the cup a flat rubber band half an inch wide, secured by a screw and washer on each side, as shown in Fig. 172. The band could be drawn aside to allow of the introduction of the egg and again to admit of its withdrawal, resting in the meantime across the broad end of the egg and holding it safely in position. India-rubber has the defect of being perishable, but the band could be renewed so easily that this is practically no objection.

THE MAGICAL PRODUCTION OF EGGS.

Where the performer merely desires to produce one or two eggs for the purpose of some trick to follow, he cannot do better than obtain them from beneath the lower edge of the waistcoat.

In some instances the article is simply "vested" after the ordinary fashion, and in the case of a celluloid or blown egg this is safe enough. But with the natural egg, in its raw state, this is rather a hazardous method, the combined weight and smoothness of the egg tending to create some risk of its escaping prematurely from its hiding-place, and producing an unrehearsed and by no means desirable effect upon the floor. To avoid this risk, it is well in such case to use the egg-clip. This is a simple piece of hard brass wire, twisted into the form shown in Fig. 173. Each of the ends is fashioned into a ring, the one rather larger than the other, the egg resting horizontally between them,

while the centre portion forms a loop, by means of which the holder is attached to a hook or button, sewn in an appropriate position to the trousers, just underneath the vest. Where several are used, a cord may be passed through the various loops, and then tied round the waist. Thus secured, there is no fear whatever of the egg falling, while yet it is so lightly held that the slightest pull brings it into the hand.

I have recently seen at Messrs. Hamleys' an egg-clip of a new and improved pattern. So far as the arrangement for supporting the egg is concerned, it is identical with that just described, but it differs from it in

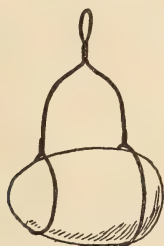


FIG. 173.

the fact that instead of the loop at top, the centre or stem portion is turned over and forms a sharp hook, by means of which the holder can be attached in an instant to any part of the clothing, and as quickly detached when no longer needed.

It will be seen that this contrivance is, with the slight variation in form necessitated by the greater length and different shape of an egg, practically the same as the "ball clip," described at p. 81.

Where, however, the mere production of some considerable number of eggs is the effect aimed at, this

can be better achieved by the use of another expedient. In this particular instance, the time-honoured popular idea of magical production,—the “up his sleeve,” which, to the public mind, has satisfactorily accounted for so many mysteries,—is actually realized, the eggs being in fact produced from the sleeve of the performer.

The method of doing this is extremely ingenious. The eggs are not the “real thing,” but dummies of celluloid. Through each end of each egg a small hole is pierced. Three or four of such eggs are threaded on a fine silk cord, as shown in Fig. 174. One end of this terminates in a good-sized dress-hook; and the other in a little soft worsted tassel, of such a size that the eggs can be drawn over it, but will not pass it by their own weight. The hook is slipped over the edge of the arm-hole of the vest. The cord, with the eggs upon it, is passed down the sleeve at the same side, and its length is so adjusted that, when the arm is fully extended, the lowermost egg lies just inside the coat cuff; but when the arm is flexed, comes into the hand. When this egg is drawn off, the rest slip down till checked by the tassel, another egg being thus made ready for production.



FIG. 174.

Each arm may be thus furnished; and, with a little practice, the production of the eggs becomes a very easy matter. At the same moment when an egg, extracted, say, from the breast pocket or from inside the open vest of a spectator, is exhibited in the one hand, the opposite arm is bent, and an egg got into the other hand, ready for a fresh production.

Theoretically, a dozen eggs may be produced in this way, six from each sleeve, and I have seen the trick so described. It would, however, be extremely unwise to produce anything like such a number, the repetition of the same effect in the same way several times over being a breach of one of the soundest of conjuring maxims. Five or six should be regarded as an outside limit, and the use of the sleeve should be alternated with some other form of production, say from the vest. This plan has the further advantage that, as the eggs in the latter case may be real ones, one of them may be accidentally (?) dropped on a plate or otherwise, and so prove, by conjurers' logic, the genuineness of the rest.

PRODUCTION OF EGGS FROM THE MOUTH.

Instructions for producing this effect were given in *Modern Magic* and *More Magic*.¹ The trick is not one suited for indiscriminate performance, but it is one highly appreciated by juvenile or bucolic spectators; and it may be worth while therefore to note one or two improvements which have been made in the method of production.

One of these consists in the substitution, for the unprepared egg placed in the mouth of the assistant, of a hard-boiled egg, with the shell removed.

In using the older method there was a certain amount of danger. If the assistant, while the egg was in his mouth, happened to be seized with a sudden fit of coughing or of laughter, he ran considerable risk of being choked. This, the use of the shell-less egg

¹ *Modern Magic*, p. 329; *More Magic*, p. 342.

avoided. This last is, however, in turn now superseded by a more artistic contrivance, in the shape of a half-shell of metal or celluloid, white outside, but internally coloured red, of a tint corresponding to that of the inside of the mouth.

The fake may be used by the performer himself, but is best adapted for that form of the trick in which the eggs are produced from the mouth of his assistant. The latter prepares for the feat by slipping the little fake into his mouth, and turning it so that its concave side shall come over the tip of the tongue. When it is desired that he shall produce an egg, he opens the mouth and pushes this slightly forward, representing to the eyes of the spectators a complete egg. The performer, bringing his hand up to take it from the mouth, shows in its place an actual egg, previously palmed, while the fake is drawn back again into the mouth, reappearing as often as may be desired. By turning the fake with the concave side outwards, or letting it rest inside the cheek, the mouth may be shown apparently empty.

At the close of the trick, the performer pushes the egg to be last produced partially into the mouth of the assistant, who with his tongue turns the fake in his mouth so that it shall be brought over the end of the egg, when both can be removed together.

When the performer produces the eggs from his own mouth, the fake may be introduced, a few moments beforehand, under cover of a simulated cough. When coughing it is natural to place the hand before the mouth, and the act of so doing brings the palmed fake just into the position needful for its insertion. If the performer has coughed once or twice before, in the

course of some other trick, the feint will appear all the more natural.

The egg-clip, described at page 397, will be found very useful in the performance of this trick, the vesting of raw eggs in the ordinary way being a trifle hazardous, and productive of considerable anxiety to a nervous performer.

Before quitting the subject of this particular illusion, it may be interesting to describe the trick as performed, some thirty years ago, by the German Court conjurer, Bellachini, whose working has one or two amusing features. I borrow my description from an article by Herr Willmann in *Die Zauberwelt*.¹

The assistant took up his position in the background, towards one side of the stage, standing with his hands behind him, as if merely waiting till his services should be required. In each of his hands were three raw eggs. In this position he remained while Bellachini performed some trick with an egg. The egg used was finally "vanished," but immediately reappeared between the lips of the assistant (this was a shell-less egg, as above described). The conjurer, catching sight of it, stepped up to him in order to take it back.

Standing at the left side of the assistant, he placed the left hand on his chest and the right hand on his back, making believe to press his body between them, and under cover of this manœuvre got into the right hand, and palmed, an egg from the concealed store in the rear. Meanwhile, as a supposed effect of the

¹ Vol. ii., p. 73.

pressure, the shell-less egg was allowed to project a little farther from the mouth.

The performer, now changing his position so as to be on the opposite side, brought up his right hand to the mouth, and apparently took the egg therefrom, though, as a matter of fact, he pushed the egg just palmed partly into the mouth, and thence produced it, while the one shown was allowed to slip back, and the mouth to close.

The egg produced was laid upon a plate and the operation was repeated until the supply was exhausted.

To negative any suspicion of a concealed store of eggs behind the assistant, the performer now and then turned him round with his back to the audience. The remaining eggs were in such case temporarily deposited in the assistant's coat-tail pockets, and again taken out when he re-assumed his former position.

Meanwhile Bellachini's second assistant, a negro, had come on to the stage from the opposite side, bearing a small tray, professedly for the reception of the eggs produced. Bellachini took it from him, looked hard at him for a moment, as if noticing something peculiar about him, and then suddenly patted him on the head, when an egg was seen to appear in his mouth; but, with due regard for local colour, it was a black one, having been dyed accordingly. Thenceforth Bellachini produced from his two human hens a white and a black egg alternately, to the no small amusement of the spectators.

A further incident is mentioned by Herr Willmann as being sometimes introduced in this trick (though

not by Bellachini) with good effect. The performer, in the act of putting the supposed pressure on the stomach of the assistant, bends down a little. The assistant takes the opportunity to give him a gentle pat on the top of the head, when an egg (secretly introduced a moment previously) is seen to appear in *his* mouth, and is produced therefrom. As may be imagined, this turning of the tables on the professor never fails to produce a shout of laughter from the audience.

A SMASHED EGG VANISHED FROM A HANDKERCHIEF.

This is scarcely a trick in itself, but may now and then be introduced with good effect in the course of some illusion in which an egg has been used. The egg, which is to all appearance, and indeed may be in fact, the genuine unprepared article, is ostensibly wrapped in a borrowed handkerchief, which some one is then invited to hold, grasping it so that the form of the egg shall be plainly visible. After a brief interval, duly occupied with "patter," the performer takes it back again, and crushes the egg, still wrapped in the handkerchief, between his hands. The owner of the handkerchief trembles for his nice clean *mouchoir*, but his anxiety proves to be groundless. The performer shakes out the handkerchief. The egg and its contents have vanished into the *Ewigkeit*, and the handkerchief is returned, not a whit the worse for having assisted in its annihilation.

The secret lies in the fact that the performer is provided with a blown egg, encased in a little bag of soft silk. To this is attached a short length of silk thread, at the opposite end of which is a bent pin. By means

of this the silk bag is secretly attached to the hinder side of the handkerchief, so as to hang, when the latter is spread out, as nearly as possible behind its centre. When the performer professedly wraps the real egg in the handkerchief he palms it, substituting for it the covered egg-shell. After crushing this within the handkerchief, he spreads out the latter, of course with the little bag to the rear. At the first convenient opportunity he palms this off, when the handkerchief is again in a condition to be returned to the owner.

In another method of egg-vanishing the secret lies in the handkerchief itself, which is of silk, and has a slit, just large enough to allow the passage of the egg, in its centre. The performer spreads this over the palm of either hand, taking care that the slit shall not be noticed, and lays the egg upon it. He then proceeds to wrap it up in the handkerchief, during which process it is allowed to slip through the handkerchief into the hand, where it is palmed. With the opposite hand he picks up the little bundle, and with the hand which holds the egg picks up from his table a small tray, in so doing allowing the egg to fall into a bag servante. The folded handkerchief is laid on the tray and offered to some lady, who is requested to hold the handkerchief tightly, that the egg may not escape. As soon as she takes it in hand she naturally makes the remark that the egg is no longer there. Professing surprise, the performer takes back the handkerchief, and opens it to verify her assertion. This he does by again spreading it over the hand, picking it up by the centre so as to conceal the slit and shaking it out.

The egg is then reproduced elsewhere, as may suit the intended *dénouement* of the trick.

THE DIMINISHING EGG.

This again is scarcely to be regarded as a trick in itself, but may very well be introduced as a sort of after-thought, forming a neat magical finish to some trick in which an egg has already figured.

The egg previously used, which we may suppose to have been submitted to some amount of examination, is secretly exchanged for a "nest" of three eggs, preferably of celluloid or ivory. Of these the two larger are hollow, lined with some soft material. Each has in one side of it an oval opening large enough to allow the passage of the next in size. The smallest of the three is solid.

The three eggs (one within the other, and therefore in appearance one only) are exhibited, with the openings downward, on the open left hand of the performer. Bringing the hands together, he palms off the largest egg, and while the general attention is drawn to the diminished size of the one remaining in the left hand, drops this into the *profonde*. The second hollow egg is then palmed off in like manner, and got rid of while handing the solid egg for examination. When this latter is returned, it is ostensibly handed to some other person for inspection, and got rid of in transit by the "tourniquet." This final "vanish" brings the feat to a fitting magical conclusion.

TO VANISH AN EGG FROM THE HAND.

To palm an egg comfortably, it should lie lengthways across the second and third fingers, and at the

same time be clipped between the tips of the first and fourth. Held in this position, it can be palmed with great facility. This method is also the best for palming a cork. The shape of the egg, however, favours the use of another sleight, which may be employed as an

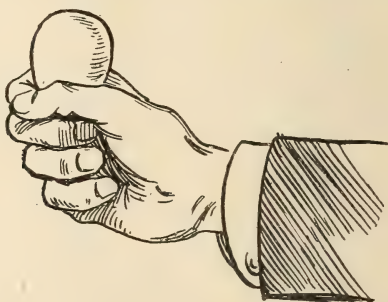


FIG. 175.



FIG. 176.

alternative. The egg is held in, or rather on, say, the right hand, as shown in Fig. 175. The left hand approaches, and apparently grasps it, raising it somewhat aloft, followed by the eyes of the performer. As a matter of fact, however, it is allowed to slip down into the right hand, where it is palmed by a slight

contraction of the last three fingers, the forefinger meanwhile being extended and pointing to the left hand. Fig. 176 gives a view of the right hand on the side *not* seen by the spectators. After the lapse of a moment or two the left hand rubs the egg away, and is shown empty, the right hand immediately afterwards producing it from under the knee, or from the pocket of a spectator.

If found more convenient by the performer, the functions of the two hands may be reversed, the egg being exhibited in the left hand and professedly removed by the right.

One method of vanishing an egg by means of a pull has been already described. In another the egg is artificial, and the free end of the pull terminates in a small narrow cork, such as is used to cork a medicine bottle. The cord is passed through this (from the larger end) and secured by a knot on the opposite end. In the larger end of the egg is a cavity, tapering to correspond with the shape of the cork, but so as to be rather a tight fit. By the aid of this arrangement the egg can be attached to the pull with great ease and with perfect security.

A SPECIAL EGG VANISHER.

I am indebted to Messrs. Hamley Brothers for the knowledge of another ingenious form of egg vanisher. This consists of a flat semicircular pocket of black glazed calico, as illustrated in Fig. 177. In length it is $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and in depth a little over 3 inches. The mouth is normally kept closed by the action of two

straight pieces of clock-spring, each enclosed in a hem at the mouth; but may be opened by pressure on the ends of these, after the same manner as the well-known bag used for producing sweets from a handkerchief. The pocket is kept in shape by means of a stiff wire passing round the semicircle on the inside.

At the point *b* is an eyelet, to which is attached a piece of cord elastic, with a loop on its free end. This loop is secured to one of the brace-buttons of the performer on the right side. The vanisher is then passed inside the braces at the back of the left side, where it is secured, by means of the wire loop *a*, to a dress-hook

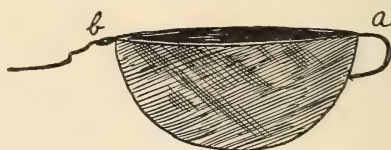


FIG. 177.

sewn to the lower edge of the performer's vest, and just covered by the coat.

When the performer desires to vanish an egg, he shows it in the right hand, standing so that his left side is turned away from the spectators. Under cover of his own body he gets the vanisher into the left hand, slipping the second finger into *a*, and holding the little bag lengthwise between this finger and the thumb, which grips it just under *b*. He then turns so that his left side shall be brought forward, brings the hands together, opens the bag by pressure on the ends as already explained, and drops the egg therein; then simultaneously extends the arms and releases the fake, which forthwith flies back under the coat. The effect

is enhanced if the performer bares his arms before showing the trick.

Readers of *More Magic* will recognize that the principle is the same as that there described (p. 212) for the vanishing of a handkerchief. The appliance now under consideration would, of course, be equally available for this purpose, and can likewise be used for vanishing a small ball, or any other article of appropriate size.

THE WANDERING EGGS.

First Method.

The effect of this trick, which is of German origin, is as follows:

Three eggs are brought in and placed on the performer's table. These may either stand upright in a plate of salt or sand, or be placed in three egg-cups, resting on a single stand, after the manner in which eggs are frequently served at the breakfast table. A couple of tall hats being procured from spectators, the performer places them on two chairs, one on each, about six feet apart. Taking the eggs one by one, he places them unmistakably in one of the hats, after which, for some reason suggested by his patter, he transfers them again one by one (first baring his arm to the elbow to show that there is "no deception") to the other. To all appearance, therefore, the eggs are now in the second hat, which we will call B, and the first, which we will call A, is empty. He gives further proof of this by turning A upside down. Restoring it to its natural position, he places B, mouth upwards, on the top of it. He touches the hats with his wand, and

pronounces the mystic "Pass." Hat B is now shown to be empty, and the three eggs are reproduced from A.

The secret lies mainly in the eggs, which are one and all faked articles. Two of them are blown eggs. To the larger end of each is attached a little loop of horsehair,¹ after the fashion shown in Fig. 178. The third is differently prepared. It is emptied through a hole in its side, after which the opening is trimmed into a neat oval, about two thirds the length of the egg. The shell is then strengthened by lining it with



FIG. 178.

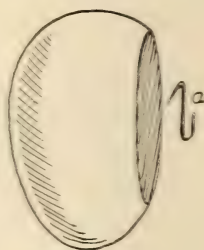


FIG. 179.

three layers of lint, well saturated with paste or glue. This lining should project a little over the edges of the opening, forming a margin to which is afterwards glued a flat piece of pasteboard of corresponding size, so that the egg when complete is as depicted in Fig. 179,

¹ To attach a loop to a blown egg may at first sight appear a rather difficult matter, but it is not so in reality. After forming the loop, the free ends are tied tightly round the centre of a little piece of lucifer match (what are known as "White Pine Vestas" are just the thing), three eighths of an inch long. This is passed through the hole, and when fairly inside the egg, will naturally lie across it. The egg is now suspended by the loop, and the bit of wood secured in position by inserting a drop of coaguline or liquid glue into the hole. This, when it dries, makes the wood adhere to the interior of the shell, and prevents its shifting.

like an ordinary egg flattened on one side. The flat surface is smeared with wax, of good adhesive character.

This side, when the eggs are brought on, is, of course, turned away from the spectators, and the remaining two eggs are so placed that the hair loops are undermost, and so out of sight. The only other item of apparatus is a sharp black pin bent into a hook, after the fashion of *a* in Fig. 179. This, till required for use, may be hooked into the lower edge of the performer's vest, just covered by the coat. When the two hats are borrowed there is naturally a momentary interval between the handing up of the first and of the second, and this the performer utilizes to hook the bent pin into the lining of the first hat, about half-way down. The hat in question will be the one we have referred to as A, and the other B.

In placing the eggs in A, the performer begins with the two which have the hair loop, and by means of such loop hitches them on to the little hook. Being, for all the spectators know, genuine eggs, it is natural that he should handle them carefully, and he can, without exciting suspicion, take full time to arrange them properly. When it comes to the turn of the third egg, he has only to take care, in placing it in the hat, that the flattened side is not exposed to the audience.

In the next stage of the trick, viz., transferring the eggs to hat B, he begins with the flattened egg. Placing this in B, he lays it on the crown, flat side uppermost, and instantly presses the back of the hand upon it. The wax causes it to adhere to the hand, which is brought up again apparently empty; the egg being in reality concealed behind it. In placing the hand in A, to take out another egg, he brushes off the adhering

egg against the side of the hat, brings it up again visibly, places it in B, and takes it out invisibly, as before. The egg is once more placed in the hat, but on this third occasion it is not placed directly therein by the right hand, but is apparently transferred in the first instance to the left, really remaining palmed in the right. The left hand is in due course brought up empty, and the spectators cannot doubt but that all three eggs are now in B. As a further proof, however, that such is really the case, the performer with his right hand grasps A, and turns it over; in so doing pressing the adhesive side of the palmed egg against the brim, outside, on the side remote from the spectators. The two blown eggs hang quietly suspended from the hook, and as the third egg adheres to the brim, the performer is enabled to pass the hat from hand to hand, showing, apparently, that the hands and hat are all absolutely empty.

The hat A is now replaced, and B placed upon it as already described. The eggs are commanded to pass from the one to the other. The left hand lifts B and shows that there is nothing therein. Meanwhile the right hand again seizes and palms the flattened egg. This is first produced, and then the other two, each being replaced in the plate or egg-holder, as at first. The little hook is brought away with the third egg, and remains attached to it.

THE WANDERING EGGS.

Another Method.

This trick resembles that last described in point of effect, inasmuch as four eggs, placed in one hat, pass

magically into another, but there is no further point of similarity between the two, the methods of working being radically different. The illusion I am about to describe is in fact two distinct tricks combined, the mode in which the eggs are made to disappear from the first hat being the invention of Professor Bellonie, while the manner of their reproduction is, I believe, a device of the ingenious Herr Willmann. Either process may, if preferred, be used alone, or in combination with some other of the tricks described in this chapter.

First, as to the disappearance. Four eggs, after being shown on a plate, are placed one by one in a borrowed hat. A handkerchief, likewise borrowed, is passed over it for a moment, and shaken out in the direction of another borrowed hat, which rests, *mouth downwards*, on a table at some distance. The first hat is then shown empty.

This done, the performer, baring his arms to the elbow, takes the second hat by the brim, still mouth downwards, in the left hand. Reaching up into it with the right hand, he brings down an egg, and lays it on the plate, then another, and so on, until all four have been reproduced. Taking one of the eggs in his left hand, he picks up the plate with the other, and brings all forward for inspection. He offers the eggs on the plate first. When these have been handed to different spectators, he says: "And now, perhaps, you would like to look at this one" (the one in the left hand). He offers it accordingly, but the hand is empty, this particular egg having once more vanished.

Now as to the *modus operandi*. The disappearance of the three eggs from hat No. 1 is accomplished by the

aid of a little network bag, just large enough to contain four eggs comfortably, and kept distended at the mouth by a piece of wire, bent into a triangle; one side being slightly curved so as to accommodate itself the better to the shape of the hat. To the centre of this curved side is soldered a little sharp-pointed hook, directed downwards; and this, during his journey back to the table after borrowing the hat, the performer hooks into the leather lining. The eggs, when placed in the hat, are in reality deposited in this bag. In the act of depositing the last he detaches the bag and lets it lie loose in the crown of the hat. When he takes the handkerchief to spread it over the opening, his wand is in his right hand. He does not lay it down, but holds it, pointing downwards, behind the handkerchief. Near the lower end of the wand is a little hook, or a mere needle-point, sloping upwards. In the act of covering the hat he lowers the wand into it, and engaging this hook into that of the little bag, lifts out the latter behind the handkerchief, and lets it drop into a bag servante fixed in readiness behind the table, the hat being thereby left empty.

Such is Professor Bellonie's method of working the disappearance. It is decidedly ingenious, but I should imagine would, as to the last part, be very difficult to work satisfactorily; apart from the fact that the holding of the wand behind the handkerchief seems awkward and unnatural. I venture to suggest as an improvement that the performer should use, in place of the wand, a piece of stiffish wire, about six inches in length, fashioned at the lower end into a hook, and at the upper into a loop, just fitting over the thumb.

This could be easily manipulated behind the handkerchief, and, when it had served its purpose of picking up the little bag, might be dropped with it into the servante.

For the reproduction of the eggs from the second hat another appliance is used. This consists of a little conical bag, of network or soft silk, closed at the mouth by a rubber ring, and having at its opposite end a little hook, for attaching it to the lining of the hat. In this are placed four eggs, three of them genuine, the other a hollow egg of celluloid, with an oval opening in one side. This is placed in the bag first, so that it shall be the last to be produced. The bag, thus loaded, is hooked to the vest of the performer at the left side, about the height of the armpit, and covered by the coat. When borrowing the hat, he receives it in the left hand, holding it mouth downwards, and during his return to the stage, hooks the little bag into the lining, as near the crown as possible. The hat being placed on the table, still mouth downwards, no one is at all likely to suspect that it contains anything.

After the eggs have been vanished from hat No. 1 and wafted by the handkerchief in the direction of No. 2, the performer bares his arms and produces the four eggs, squeezing them out of the little bag one after another as already described. Before producing the last (which it will be remembered is the hollow egg), he unhooks the little bag, and deftly packs it inside the egg, which he then lays, opening downwards, with the others on the plate.

Having returned the two hats, it occurs to him that the audience may like to examine the eggs. Picking

up the hollow egg in the right hand, he makes believe to place it in the left, really palming it in the right. He makes a step towards the audience with the left hand extended (half closed as if holding the egg), but bethinking himself that the company may like to examine the other eggs also, he steps back, and with the right hand picks up the plate containing them, in so doing letting the palmed egg fall on the servante. The eggs on the plate are examined, and found void of preparation. That professedly in the left hand is likewise offered for inspection; but is found to have somehow dematerialized itself in transit, for the hand is empty.

As regards this portion of the trick also, I venture to offer one or two suggestions. First, that it would add to the effect of the trick if the performer, before producing the first egg, were to turn down the leather lining of the hat; otherwise it might possibly be imagined that the eggs rested on the lining and were produced from thence. As the reader is aware, the suspicion would be unfounded, but the mere possibility of such an explanation tends to discount in some degree the effect of the trick.

Secondly, as to the final vanishing of the hollow egg. It seems to me that a better plan would be to bring forward all four eggs on the plate, and after handing the three unprepared ones to different spectators, to pick up the hollow egg with the left hand and with the right to offer the plate to a fourth spectator, with the remark: "Perhaps you, sir, will examine the plate." Then, apparently transferring the egg from the left hand to the right by means of the

“tourniquet,” say, looking about from one to another, “And who will examine this last egg?” While the right hand apparently offers it to the spectator, the left drops it into the *profonde*.

It is obvious that the two stages of the trick may be reversed, if preferred; the eggs being first produced from the one hat, and then made to disappear from the other. This, in fact, is the order of procedure indicated by Herr Willmann. The reader can suit his own taste in this particular.

NEW EGG AND TUMBLER TRICK.

This neat little trick, for which magicians are indebted to another German wizard, Herr Hans Meckel, illustrates a further use of the bottomless tumbler, described at page 92.

In effect it is as follows: A tumbler, previously examined, is placed upside down on a tray on the table, and a borrowed handkerchief is thrown over it. When this is removed, an egg is seen beneath the glass. Again the handkerchief is thrown over the glass, and removed; when the egg is found to have disappeared.

The effect produced is too quickly over to be worth making an independent item of a programme, but will serve well enough as “padding” for some other trick which may need amplification. As I have hinted, a large part of the secret lies in the use of the bottomless tumbler. If possible, it should be contrived that a glass of similar appearance, but unprepared, is used in some previous trick, in which case it should be an easy matter to substitute the one for the other. If this is not possible, the faked glass must be exchanged for

the other (just examined) during the return journey of the performer to his table, and the latter dropped into the *profonde*. The bottomless glass is then left inverted, on the tray at one end of the table, while the performer borrows a handkerchief. In a bag servante behind the table, at the opposite end to that at which the tray is placed, is a celluloid egg, to one end of which is attached a black silk thread about nine inches in length. This is laid along the edge of the table. At its free end is a loop of fine wire, an inch and a half in length, and large enough to admit the thumb.

The operator, having obtained the loan of a handkerchief, spreads it out on the table, just in front of the servante above mentioned. When about to throw it over the glass, he picks it up by clipping the two nearest corners between the first and second fingers of each hand, and at the same moment inserts the right thumb into the wire loop,¹ thereby lifting the egg, which is then, under cover of the handkerchief, gently lowered into the glass and in due course exhibited. When the handkerchief is thrown over the glass for the second time, the thumb is again inserted into the ring (which is naturally left hanging just outside the glass); the egg is lifted out of the glass, and allowed to drop back into the net.

AN ILLUSTRATION OF FREE TRADE PRINCIPLES.

A trick with the above title, derived from a French source, was described in *Drawing-room Conjuring* (p.

¹ The insertion of the thumb may be facilitated by bending the outer end of the wire loop, so that it may curve slightly upwards as it lies on the table.

125).¹ The present is a German and more elaborate version of the same trick.

The requirements for the trick are as follows:

1. A candlestick with candle, unlighted.
2. A match-box, placed beside it, with the drawer portion pushed partly open, and a small silk handkerchief packed into the space thereby left vacant.

3. A bottomless tumbler.

4. A rummer or round-bellied wine-glass.

5. A carafe of water.

6. A mechanical egg-cup, as described at page 392.

7. The half-shell belonging to the egg-cup, loaded with a second silk handkerchief, corresponding with that in the match-box.

8. A second half-shell, of clear glass.

The above articles should be placed together on a small table; Nos. 1-6 in full view, Nos. 7 and 8 hidden behind some other article.

In addition to the above items, the performer carries on his own person:

9. In pochette on right side, a hollow finger, as described at page 209.

10. In the left coat-tail pocket, an egg wrapped tightly in a third silk handkerchief, of same appearance as the first two.

11. Just inside the opening of the vest, on the left side, a hollow egg of celluloid or metal, with opening at its smaller end. The egg should be placed with this open end outermost, *i. e.*, nearest to the opening of the vest.

12. Hanging by a piece of cord elastic under the

¹ George Routledge & Sons.

coat, on the left side, an egg-holder, as described at page 394.

13. Vested in the ordinary way, a genuine egg.

Thus provided, the performer is ready to show the trick. The patter suggested by the German adapter¹ is very well conceived, and I cannot do better, in the interest of the reader, than give a free translation of it.

“Ladies and gentlemen, it is a frequent boast of conjurers that they work without apparatus, and make use only of every-day objects. I go still further; I begin my experiments with nothing at all. I stand before you absolutely empty-handed. No magic wand; no anything! What I may need for my performance I shall borrow from yourselves, or create from nothing on the spot. Could you, sir, oblige me with an egg? You have n’t one? Surely you are joking, sir. I have private information to the contrary. You certainly have one, and here it is.”

In the course of his patter, the performer has got down the vested hen’s egg, and produces it from the beard or from inside the vest of the gentleman addressed. “Now I shall want a small silk handkerchief. What! you can’t oblige me with that either? Never mind, we will soon get one.” So saying, he draws up his sleeves a little and shows the hands empty. Picking up the match-box from the table, he takes out a match, strikes it, and lights the candle. This done, he closes the box, thereby pushing out the handkerchief into the left hand. Running the hand smartly up the candle, he produces the handkerchief as if from the flame, and after exhibiting it tucks it

¹ *Die Zauberwelt*, Vol. ii., page 22.

into the front of his vest, just over the concealed hollow egg.

“Good. We now have all we need. I shall now have the honour to deliver for your benefit a short address of a scientific nature. You need not be afraid; it won’t last more than an hour, at most. The subject will be that much disputed question, ‘Protection *versus* Free Trade.’ Perhaps one of you gentlemen would kindly assist me in the practical illustration of my address. Thank you! Stand here, sir, if you please.

“Now we will consider that you represent agricultural France, while I stand for England, the great manufacturing country. This little handkerchief” (he indicates the one he has just tucked into the front of his vest) “is an English product, and this egg is a product of France.”

He picks up the egg-cup, and apparently places the egg therein, but in reality deftly substitutes the half egg, which, when in position, has the appearance of the real one. He obtains from some gentleman the loan of a handkerchief, with which he covers both. “Eggs must be carefully packed,” he remarks, and during the moment in which, with one hand, still covered by the handkerchief, he hands the egg-cup to his volunteer assistant to hold, he turns over the half egg in the cup, thereby uncovering the little silk handkerchief with which the half egg was loaded. The gentleman is requested to hold the handkerchief high above his head, so that neither he nor the spectators are able to perceive that the supposed egg is no longer under the handkerchief.

“On the one side, therefore, we have a superfluity of eggs, and on the other an overplus of manufactured

articles. Now, if no protective duties stopped the way, to exchange them would be an extremely simple matter."

Here he takes the silk handkerchief from the opening of the vest, and with it, unknown to the spectators, the hollow egg. Moving the hands up and down, he gradually works the handkerchief into the egg, which he then exhibits, keeping the opening out of sight.

"You see that the egg has come to England, and we shall find that the handkerchief has passed to France, neither of them paying any duty. That is the principle of free trade."

He uncovers the egg-cup and shows that the egg which was placed therein has left it, the silk handkerchief having taken its place. Taking this, and tucking it into the front of his vest as before, he places the hollow egg, opening downwards, in the egg-cup, previously, however, dropping in the glass half-shell, so that the egg rests inside this. These he places, for the moment, on one side, and continues his oration as follows:

"We have railways, telegraphs, telephones, and wireless telegraphy, but one thing is still wanting: an aerial parcel post, to flash goods quick as thought from point to point through space, wherever we may wish to send them. It would be a capital idea, it seems to me, to get up a company for that purpose. Let us suppose, for instance, that this glass" (the bottomless tumbler) "was the distant point to which the egg and this little handkerchief had to be transported. Might I ask you, sir, to cover the glass with your own handkerchief, or let me do so, and put this rubber ring round it to keep it in place?"

This is done accordingly, with due precaution that the lender of the handkerchief shall not discover the bottomless condition of the tumbler. Meanwhile the performer has got the wrapped-up egg from his coat-pocket, and in taking back the covered glass introduces this into it from below. Keeping the egg from falling out with his finger, he places the glass on the table, or still better on a tray, the wrapping of the egg in the handkerchief preventing any rattling against the sides of the glass. This done, he takes the hollow egg out of the egg-cup and the handkerchief from the front of his vest. He places himself at some little distance from the table; meanwhile, under cover of these various movements, getting the egg-holder (No. 12) into his left hand. Inserting the egg, open end outwards, into the holder, he proceeds to work the handkerchief into the egg (this already holds one handkerchief, but has ample space for two) and then vanishes the whole under the coat.

"The egg and handkerchief are gone, you see" (he shows his hands empty). "Doubtless by this time they have both reached their destination." He uncovers the glass, unrolls the silk handkerchief from the egg which is therein, and reveals the egg. He places the latter in the egg-cup, which, it will be remembered, still contains the glass shell. While doing this with the left hand, the right hand goes in search of the hollow finger, which is slipped over the ring finger; all being made safe by his immediately afterwards throwing the silk handkerchief over this hand.

"I began with nothing, and with nothing I propose to conclude."

Bringing the hands together, he draws off, under

cover of the handkerchief, the hollow finger; works the handkerchief into it, and then places it between the second and third fingers of the left hand, and shows the hands, moving them gently about, apparently empty.

Moving to the table, he gets rid of the false finger, and, taking the round-bellied glass, fills it with water. He then takes the egg-cup and inverts it. The egg drops into his hand, the glass half-shell covering its upper end. Over this he immediately throws a borrowed handkerchief; then, grasping the half-shell round its lower edge through the handkerchief, he with the other hand palms and removes the egg, which he forthwith drops into a pocket. He invites any one to feel (from above) that the egg is still in the handkerchief; then handing the glass of water to some spectator to hold, he drapes the handkerchief over it, and asks the same or another person to take hold of the egg, but the moment the hand is advanced to do so, he himself lets go. The handkerchief is drawn off, and the egg has disappeared, the shell from its transparency being invisible in the water.

The shell should be allowed to fall somewhat askew in the water. If it falls too squarely, the air within it might not immediately escape, and instead of sinking at once, it might float for a moment or two, with fatal effect so far as this part of the illusion is concerned.

"Everything has now disappeared, and we are now just as we began. So, not to weary you, ladies and gentlemen, I will myself disappear." Which he does accordingly, temporarily or permanently, as the case may be.

EGGS FROM NOWHERE, AND BACK AGAIN.

A pretty sequel to the magical production of eggs, after one or other of the methods described at pp. 396-399, is as follows: The eggs, when produced, are placed one by one in a hat. When all are deposited, the performer undertakes to dematerialize them. The hat is covered with a handkerchief, under pretence that warmth is necessary for the process. A moment later, the handkerchief is removed and shaken out, both sides being shown. The hat is turned over, and is found empty, the eggs having completely disappeared.

The secret here lies in the use of a bag-shaped, wide-mouthed net of fine silk, round the edge of which is threaded a cord, after the usual fashion of such bags; so that by pulling the cord the mouth is closed. The cord is longer by some inches than is needful to go round the circumference of the bag, and to its free end is attached a ring of thin wire, the size of a shilling. This net, with its mouth open, is vested, or otherwise concealed about the performer's person, and introduced into the borrowed hat during the transit to the table. The performer then commences the production of eggs. As they are produced, he lays them one by one in the hat, taking care to lay them well inside the mouth of the net. As eggs are naturally handled with a certain amount of caution, he has ample opportunity to arrange the net to suit his convenience, and in so doing he picks up the surplus cord, and places it so that the wire ring shall hang just over the brim of the hat, on the hinder side. The intended number of eggs, say four or five, being complete, he covers the hat with the handkerchief. He picks it up again by

clipping its two nearest corners between the first and second fingers of each hand. The thumb, thus left free, is inserted in the wire ring. The act of lifting the handkerchief pulls the cord and closes the net, which, with its contents, is lifted up behind the handkerchief and dropped into a bag servante. Both hat and handkerchief may, of course, now be submitted to the closest inspection, as there is nothing about either to reveal the secret.

If the performer cares still further to elaborate the trick, he may bring it to a very effective conclusion by offering to show the audience "how it is done." The eggs, he explains, are really still in the handkerchief, but for the time being in a dematerialized condition. They will, however, again materialize at his command. In proof of his assertion, he proceeds to pour the eggs one by one from the handkerchief into the hat, after the manner described in *More Magic*, pp. 330-332. As, according to the usual termination of the trick, the eggs will again have vanished, the audience can hardly dispute his assurance that "that is just the way they went" on the former occasion.

AN EGG-LAYING HAT.

There are one or two different versions of this trick. That which I am about to describe, and which is one of the most ingenious, is the invention of a conjurer named Marcellin.

The effect of the trick is as follows: The performer brings forward a small circular Japanese tray, filled with bran. This, after having been duly inspected, is placed upon a small table. Upon another table, at a

little distance, is a tall hat, the performer's own property, standing mouth upwards.

After showing his hands empty, he grasps the hat by the brim, and turns it upside down. Then, placing the finger-tips on each side of the crown, he lifts it up, and lowers it carefully over the tray of bran. He explains to the audience that the hat is the abode of an invisible hen. At first, he says, she laid invisible eggs, which was the reason for keeping her in the hat, so as to know where to find them, and to prevent people stepping on them unawares. Now, however, she has come to see the error of her ways, and lays them in visible shape. If the performer is ventriloquist enough to introduce at this point a slight "clucking" under the hat, so much the better. In any case, when he lifts the hat (which is again done by the crown, in order to prove "no deception"), an egg is seen resting in the nest formed by the bran on the tray. The effect may be repeated, if desired, until three or four eggs have been produced in similar fashion.

The secret lies in a special preparation of the hat. The eggs are of celluloid, and each has a minute hole drilled through it from end to end. Through this is passed a needle, carrying a piece of black silk thread doubled in half. The diameter of the hole in the egg is so small as only just to allow the passage of the doubled thread. The egg, therefore, can be drawn off the thread at pleasure, but will not fall off by its own weight. The needle, having about six inches of the double thread between it and the egg, is now passed from within through the crown of the hat. The egg is drawn up close to the crown, and the needle stuck into the hat on the side which is intended to be

kept away from the spectators. Any surplus thread projecting from the lower end of the egg is cut off, leaving only half an inch or so remaining, the general result being as shown in Fig. 180.

The hat, thus prepared, is placed on the table in the first instance mouth upwards, but shortly afterwards turned over, as already described. When the performer lifts the hat by the crown, apparently to show that he introduces nothing beneath, he has ample opportunity to get a finger under the thread. By pulling on this a little the thread is drawn through the egg, which is thereby freed, and falls on to the bran.



FIG. 180.

Where it is desired to produce a second or third egg the performer is instructed by the inventor of the trick to attach them to the hat in the same manner as described for the first. He even suggests that a circle of eggs may be formed all round the hat, with one in the centre. This, it appears to me, would be scarcely a desirable arrangement. On the other hand, it would seem feasible to suspend two, or even three, eggs on one thread, and produce them one at a time. If it were found that the additional weight made the eggs come off too freely, this might be neutralized by slightly waxing the ends of the thread before cutting them short, and thereby, in some small degree, increasing the amount of friction.

A NOVEL EGG-BAG TRICK.

The egg-bag, in its ancient form, has been done to death, and at the present day is relegated to the wizards of the schoolroom. But, in the improved version of the trick which I am about to describe, a similar effect is produced by wholly different means, and the clever gentleman who always knows "how it's done" will in this case find himself baffled, for he may turn the bag inside out in search of the suspected inner pocket, but will find nothing whatever to explain the mysterious appearances and disappearances of the egg.

For the purpose of the trick, two celluloid eggs are used, with a half-shell, fitting indifferently over one end of either of them. The "bag," made of tammy or some similar material, is of the usual small size, viz., about six inches by eight, and has no lining or other speciality.

The performer begins by borrowing a hat and inviting some one to come upon the stage and assist him. The bag is handed to the volunteer assistant, who is requested, after examining it as minutely as he pleases and making sure that there is nothing in it, to hold it with both hands, keeping the mouth open by inserting a forefinger at each end. Meanwhile, the performer exhibits the two eggs, over one of which is the half-shell, its presence being concealed by the forefinger, encircling the egg. The hands are moved about in such a way as to show that, save for the two eggs, they are empty. The spectators having had sufficient opportunity to convince themselves on this point, the performer lays both eggs on the left hand, the half-shell being palmed off and retained in the right. His

next step is to place both eggs unmistakably in the hat, but, having done so, he changes his mind, remarking that it will be better to put one egg only in the hat and one in the bag. He accordingly dips the right hand into the hat, and takes out, apparently, both eggs, but in reality one egg only and the half-shell, held as in Fig. 181. Remarking that he will leave one egg in the bag, he dips his hand in and brings it out again with one egg only, having apparently left the other in the hat. As a matter of fact, what he really brings out is the solid egg with

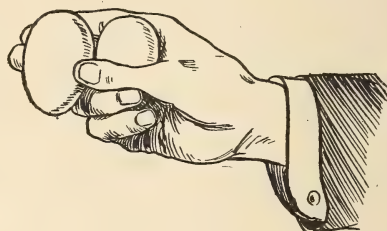


FIG. 181.

the half-shell over it, so that the bag remains empty. The egg remaining in the hand, with the half-shell over it, he places in the hat. Professedly there is now one egg in the bag and one in the hat.

Ordering the (imaginary) egg in the bag to pass into the hat, he dips his hand into the latter and produces thence two eggs, with the shell over one of them, again appearing just as shown in Fig. 181, but with this difference, that the second solid egg now rests under the shell. The bag is examined, and found empty.

The volunteer assistant is requested to hold the bag as before, but in handing it to him, the performer

deftly drops into it the egg concealed under the shell. The appearance of the hand is unaltered, the spectators still seeing, as they believe, two eggs. After placing these in the hat the performer orders one of them to pass back to the bag, where it is in due course found.

The egg really placed in the hat is reproduced with the shell over it, as one only, and the hat shown empty. The shell is palmed off, and the two eggs and bag are once more offered for examination.

An ingenious performer, once acquainted with the principle, will find numerous ways of varying the trick. For instance, after showing the trick as above, the performer might explain that the egg really passes through the crown of the hat. Nobody believes him; so he proceeds to prove his assertion. Holding the egg encircled by the finger and thumb of right hand, with the half-shell on its upper end, and taking the hat in the same hand, he shows the latter on all sides. All can see that it is empty, and that there is but one egg in the hand. He then transfers the hat to the left hand, and in so doing drops the egg into that hand, which forthwith grasps the brim of the hat, the egg being held against the inside, like the coins in the "money-catching" trick. Showing the half-shell, convex end outwards, still between the finger and thumb, he rubs it against the crown of the hat, the effect to the spectators being that the egg has passed half-way through. A moment later he palms the shell, and at the same moment the complete egg is allowed to fall audibly into the hat, whence it is forthwith produced.

THE RIBBON-PRODUCING EGG.

The reader has already had several examples of good things for which he is indebted to the inventive genius of Hartz. This clever little trick is another instance of his ingenuity.

The effect of the trick is indicated by the title. A plate of raw eggs is offered for examination. The keenest eye cannot detect any sign of preparation about them, for as a matter of fact there is none.¹

The spectators select one at their pleasure. The performer, taking that egg and no other, chips the shell with a sharp-pointed hammer. Just within the opening a little knot is seen. The performer, pulling at this, finds it to be the end of a piece of narrow ribbon. Still he continues to pull, until a dozen yards or so have been produced, after which he breaks the egg, and shows it to be a perfectly natural one.

The apparatus used is in two parts. The first is a spool or reel mounted upon a plate, in such manner that it shall revolve freely. This is attached, by means of a strap, to the left forearm, just below the elbow. On this is coiled some ten or twelve yards of ribbon, about one half or three quarters of an inch wide. The second item is a brass tube about $\frac{5}{16}$ of an inch thick, and the length of an average hen's egg, soldered into a shallow cup. This cup has a perforation at the bottom, corresponding with the bore of the tube. The cup is of such a size as just to accommodate the larger end of an

¹ There is a well-known trick in which a coil of paper is produced from the interior of an egg (*More Magic*, p. 339), but in that case the egg is a "faked" article, and will not bear minute inspection. The great advantage of being enabled to produce the same effect with an unprepared egg will be readily appreciated.

egg. (See Fig. 182). The free end of the ribbon on the spool is passed through the cup and tube from the under side, and secured from slipping back by a knot.

The eggs used for the trick are not prepared in any way, but they must be exactly the right size. To ensure this, they are carefully selected beforehand with the aid of a gauge, any which are found to be ever so little too short or too long being rejected.

An egg having been selected by the spectators, the performer takes it between the thumb and fingers of



FIG. 182.

the left hand, wherein the fake is palmed. Taking a sharp-pointed hammer, he taps and cracks the broad end of the shell. At this point, however, he professes to discover that he has begun at the wrong end of the egg. He therefore turns it the other way up, in so doing forcing the chipped portion over the tube and down into the cup. He then taps and breaks the small end of the shell. As soon as he has made an opening, the knot becomes visible. Seizing this, he draws out the ribbon yard by yard, of course quite dry, and when the whole has come through, withdraws the fake. He moves back to his table to get a glass

wherein to break the egg, and takes that opportunity to drop the fake on the servante or elsewhere out of sight.

The final breaking of the egg, while adding materially to the effect of the trick, at the same time (by destroying the shell) removes all traces of the method of working.

There is a curious parallelism in this trick with one of my own, invented, by the way, long before I had any knowledge of Hartz's trick. The effect produced in this case was the production of several yards of ribbon from a chosen orange. Though, strictly speaking, out of place in this chapter, inasmuch as it has no concern with eggs, it may be interesting, on account of the similarity of principle, to introduce it, as a sort of parenthesis, at this point.

THE BEWITCHED ORANGE.

For this feat the only visible apparatus consists of a knife and a couple of small oranges. The latter, if the performer is an expert in palming, he may produce from the beard or from under the coat-collar of a spectator. If he is not conjurer enough for this, he must be content to bring them in in more prosaic fashion, on a plate. He hands both to the spectators, and invites them to decide which he shall use.

The selection having been made, he takes the chosen orange in his left hand, remarking that in the Mahatma country—where he comes from—the ladies use this kind of orange to tie up their hair. "You don't see how they manage it? I'll show you." So saying, he gently rubs the orange with the fingers of the right

hand. A moment later he withdraws them with a jerk, and an end of narrow silk ribbon is seen hanging out of the orange at the point just rubbed by the fingers. "Here are the first ten inches or so." He pulls it, and continues to draw till some six or eight yards have been produced. When the supply comes to an end, he cuts open the orange, which is found in a perfectly natural condition, with nothing whatever to account for its eccentric behaviour.

The secret lies in the dexterous use of the little appliance illustrated in Fig. 183. It consists of a flat

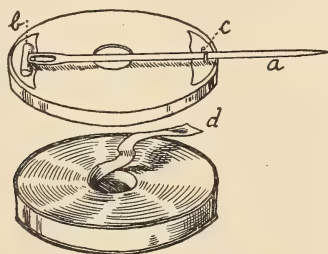


FIG. 183.

tin box, with a hole in the centre of its lid. Fixed to the bottom portion, inside, is a miniature reel, round which is coiled the ribbon, *d*. The lid portion has a circular opening in the centre. A steel bodkin *a* lies across this opening, the "eye" end being inserted under a little cross-piece *b*, while the middle is held fast by a spring clip *c*. A notch filed in the bodkin at this point prevents its shifting, the whole having the appearance of a clumsy sort of brooch. To prepare the apparatus for use, the inner end of the coil of ribbon is drawn out through the hole in the lid, and passed, to the length of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches, through the

eye of the bodkin, the loose end being then tucked back into the hole, and the bodkin disposed as already mentioned.

The apparatus thus prepared is held in the palm of the left hand, the bodkin being upwards, with its point guarded by the forefinger. In the act of transferring the orange to this hand the performer impales it on the point of the bodkin, which he at the same time raises out of the clip and thrusts home. The fingers of the right hand, which are rubbing the opposite side of the orange, feel the point as it comes through. They instantly seize it and pull it through with a jerk. About a foot of the ribbon comes with it, but the jerk detaches the bodkin from the ribbon, the loose end of which is left hanging down. Seizing this with the right hand (the bodkin remaining concealed in the same hand), the performer begins to draw out the ribbon. The "fake" in the left hand lying close up to the orange, it is impossible that it should be seen during the production of the ribbon; and afterwards the picking up of the knife to cut the orange affords ample opportunity to get rid of it.

The fake is very neatly manufactured, in brass, by Messrs. Hamley, to whom I presented the idea. The trick will be found listed in their catalogue under the title of "The Chosen Orange and Mystic Ribbon."

N. B.—For sundry other tricks in which eggs are used, see the chapter treating of "Handkerchief Tricks."

CHAPTER XI.

TRICKS WITH HATS.

THE tall hat has always been a special favourite of the conjurer; indeed, the average wizard would find it nearly as hard to keep a hat out of his entertainment as Mr. Dick did to keep a certain royal head out of his Memorial. In preceding chapters the hat has played a considerable, though to some extent a secondary, part. The present chapter will be devoted to tricks in which the hat itself forms the most important "property."

Prominent (and, sad to say, universally popular) among hat tricks are those in which the article comes in for some form of maltreatment at the hands of the performer, and in which the unhappy lender suffers more or less acute anxiety as to his cherished "topper." The more uncomfortable he looks, the greater is the delight of the spectators. As Mr. Gilbert, in one of his *Bab Ballads*, says,—

"It 's human nature, p'raps ; if so,
Oh, is n't human nature *low* !"

The conjurer's mission, however, is not to improve the morals of his audience, but merely to amuse them, and I do not know that I can better commence this chapter than by instructing the reader how

TO CUT A PIECE OUT OF A BORROWED HAT, AND RESTORE
IT.

Having borrowed a tall hat, the performer announces his intention of passing something or other, say, an egg, as elsewhere described, through the crown. Professing to find a difficulty in the matter, he asks whether he may cut a hole in the hat. The owner, naturally believing that the request is a mere joke, gives a more or less willing assent to the operation, whereupon the performer takes his penknife and cuts a round hole, some two and a half inches in diameter, in the silken covering of the crown. There does not appear to be room for any make-believe, for the hat is clearly the same that was lent, and the cut piece hangs loose, exposing a circular patch of the white interior lining. The operator begins to cut through this also, but bethinks himself (though somewhat late in the day) that if he cuts a hole, as proposed, there will not be much magic in passing the egg through it. He therefore decides to dispense with the aperture, and, as a necessary preliminary, magically restores the hat to its former condition, after which he proceeds with the trick he had announced, or some other, near enough to it in effect to be accepted as a substitute.

The secret here depends on the use of a little fake, which the reader can without difficulty manufacture for himself. The first step is to cut from the centre of the crown of an old silk hat a circular piece two and a half inches in diameter. The piece cut out will consist of two parts: the silk covering and the stiff brown material of which the body of the hat is formed. The former should be glued to the latter and pressed flat;

after which, with a sharp penknife, an inner circle with the same centre, but half an inch less in diameter, is cut in the disc thus formed. The cut is made completely through, save as to one inch of the circumference. Here the millboard alone is cut through, the silken fabric being left to serve as a hinge. Under these circumstances the central piece forms a movable flap, which may be made to close the central opening, or allowed to hang away from it, at pleasure.

A second circular disc, of the same size, is cut out of cardboard and covered (by means of paste) with some



FIG. 184.

white material such as may fairly represent the inside lining of a hat. A circle, corresponding with the flap of the first disc, is drawn on this, and through the marginal space, from the lining side, are driven three sharp-pointed drawing-pins. Glue is smeared on the space between the inner and outer circumference, and the two discs are thereby joined together, pressure being used to make them adhere. As there is no glue on the centre portion, the circular flap still hangs free on its hinge. The edges are blackened throughout. In Fig. 184, *a* depicts the fake with the flap closed, *b* the same with the flap open, and *c* its reverse side, with the three pins projecting through it.

When he desires to show the trick, the performer palms this appliance, points outwards, and at a convenient moment presses it against the centre of the crown of the borrowed hat, to which the pins make it adhere.

He then places the hat temporarily on the table, the crown towards the company. In so doing, he is careful to keep the hinged side of the flap uppermost, when it will naturally remain closed. Being black upon black, and of the same material as the hat, it is invisible at a very short distance.

On receiving permission to cut a hole in the crown, he makes believe to do so, and then, turning the hat so that the hinge shall be undermost and the flap fall open, shows (apparently) that the deed is really done, the white lining being visible through the hole. Then, alleging some more or less satisfactory reason for going no further, he closes the flap, and a moment or two later palming off the fake, he is in a position to "restore" the hat in any way he pleases.

A GLASS OF WINE IN A HAT.

This is a trick of the farcical order. It is hardly adapted for a West End drawing-room, but will be found very useful by the conjurer who goes in for comic business and who employs an assistant of the "funny man" type; the zany who misinterprets every order given to him, and whose pretended mistakes are the delight of a rustic or schoolboy audience.

The performer, having borrowed and used a hat for the purpose of some trick, passes on to another, leaving the borrowed head-gear meanwhile standing on the

table. The later trick is one involving the production or use of a glass of red wine, say port or claret. He hands the glass to the assistant to be placed upon the table, but the latter, mistaking his wishes, pours the wine into the upturned hat. The wizard, exasperated by his stupidity, threatens him with chastisement, and finally tells him to take the hat away and try to get it clean again. He does so, holding it with both hands before him, but just as he passes out at the wing, raises it to his mouth, as if to drink the wine. The performer calls him back, and he accordingly returns, holding the hat before him in its former position, but showing streaks of red at each corner of his mouth and red splashes upon his shirt front where the wine has run down upon it. Taking the hat from him, and dismissing him with a make-believe kick, or other gesture of disgust, the performer returns with it to his table.

Just as he reaches it, he turns the inside of the hat to the spectators. The white lining of the crown, to the depth of about half an inch, is stained red. He places the hat on the table, and gazing into it with an expression of mingled annoyance and perplexity, takes out his handkerchief and begins to wipe the interior. When he returns the handkerchief to his pocket, this, too, bears the crimson stains, but the hat apparently is not much the better, for he still sadly gazes into it, as if completely at a loss to remedy the damage. "No! it is hopeless," he exclaims; "a stain like that will never come out by natural means. Natural—did I say? But what about *unnatural* means! Aha! I am saved. The magic wand! What ho! my attendant sprites. Abracadabra!"

As he speaks, he describes with his wand a triangle (or anything else) upon the crown of the hat, rattles the wand within, and forthwith hands it back to the owner, free from mark or stain.

Now for the explanation. At the close of the trick for which the hat was originally borrowed, the performer hands it to the assistant, telling him to brush it. He goes with it for that purpose behind the scenes, but instantly reappears, brush in hand, and after finishing the brushing operation, places the hat, crown downwards, on the table. During his momentary absence, however, he has in reality exchanged the

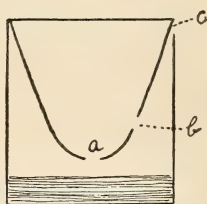


FIG. 185.

borrowed hat for another, the property of the performer.

This contains a cylindrical tin receptacle, like a large-sized jam pot, as shown (in section) in Fig. 185. It will be observed that it is very much smaller internally than it is externally, the interior being cup-shaped, so that between the inner and outer walls there is a considerable space. At the points *a* and *b*, there are holes, each about an eighth of an inch in diameter, and at *c* a third, of about the same size; but this last when the vessel is in use is plugged with wax. The other two holes are left open. The apparatus is so arranged in

point of size as to fit the hat pretty closely, the leather band lapping just over its upper edges, and helping to keep it in position.

When the glass of wine is poured into the hat, it really falls into the tin receptacle. The wine passes through the hole *a*, and runs into the outer chamber, where it settles down at the bottom, as shown in the diagram. If the hat be now turned over, the wine does not escape, but runs down into the angles at the sides; the airhole *b* being so placed that in either position of the hat it shall always be above the level of the liquid. When, therefore, the assistant pretends to drink from the hat, his shirt-front does not in reality suffer, but during his momentary absence, he makes, with a pencil of red grease-paint, one or two marks thereon, and one at each corner of his mouth. He also during the same moment changes the hat, the one he now brings back being the one originally borrowed. This, however, has been in the interval prepared by inserting an oval-shaped piece of thin paper, stained on one side with red, into the crown. The paper should be of such a size that when fitted into the crown, as above, about half an inch should remain turned up all round.

The handkerchief which the performer uses to wipe the hat is beforehand partially stained red, but when first exhibited it is so folded that the stained portion shall be inside, and therefore not visible. The pretended wiping of the inside of the hat gives him an opportunity to crush up and palm the stained paper, and further to shake out the handkerchief, and, in taking it out again, to exhibit the reddened portion.

The trick is now done, and it only needs a little

dramatic ability in the performer to bring it to an effective termination.

When the performance is over and it becomes necessary to get the wine out of the tin receptacle, this is done by unstopping the hole *c*, and pouring out the wine through this opening, neither of the other two holes being available for that purpose.

THE MESMERIZED HAT.

There are two or three effects which come under this heading. The first is the simple lifting of the hat by supposed magnetic attraction. The hat is turned mouth downwards, and the hand laid, with due solemnity, flat upon its crown. When the hand is again lifted, the hat adheres to it, and may be waved about in any direction.

One method of producing this effect was given in *More Magic* (page 315). The plan I am about to describe is simpler, and in some respects, I think, better. The active agent is a piece of black thread twenty-seven or twenty-eight inches in length, joined together at the ends. This is laid on the performer's table in the shape of an equilateral triangle, one of the sides of such triangle being parallel with the front of the table. A borrowed tall hat is placed on this, in such manner that its mouth shall lie right across that side of the triangle.

The performer, standing behind the opposite angle of the triangle, makes a few remarks about phrenology. He professes to have improved upon that science, inasmuch as he is able to read a person's character from the mere shape of his hat, without touching his head.

He accordingly proceeds to enumerate, according to his fancy, a few of the characteristics of the owner of this particular hat.

While doing so, it is natural that he should finger the hat a little, as the phrenologist does the bumps of his subject, and under cover of this process it becomes an easy matter to raise the hinder portion of the thread till it comes across the top of the hat, which is thus encircled vertically by an endless band.

The hat is now ready for lifting. Having brought his phrenological lecture to a conclusion, the performer remarks upon the large amount of animal magnetism which some gentlemen leave in their hats. Whether such is the case in the present instance he cannot say, but he proposes to put the matter to the test. Laying his hand flat on the crown of the hat, he lifts it up again. At first the hat remains undisturbed, but at a third or fourth attempt it adheres to the hand and rises with it; the fact being that at such third or fourth attempt the performer slips his fingers (not the thumb) under the thread. By elevating the knuckles, as in the act of forming the "bridge" at billiards, the thread is drawn taut (see Fig. 186), and the hat may be moved in any direction.¹

If the little finger be first introduced under the thread at the point where it makes an angle with the side of the hat, and thence brought to the top, the thread will be lifted and the other fingers may be passed under it without difficulty. When the trick has lasted long enough, the performer breaks the

¹ For all tricks of this sort, the thread used must be thin and yet strong. Kerr's Lustre Twist, No. 36, combines these two qualities in an exceptional degree. It may be procured of any haberdasher.

thread and lets it fall on the ground, after which the hat may be freely offered for examination.

There is another version of this trick, in which the black thread (which in this case is considerably longer) is passed over the performer's head like a necklace, hanging down in front of him. While handling the hat, mouth downwards, he passes the lower portion of the loop underneath it. This done, by pressing the fingers on the crown of the hat he forces the latter away



FIG. 186.

from him, supported by the thread. The effect is that the hat appears to adhere to the finger-tips. This, however, is a very inferior method.

When the conjurer performs on a regular stage, and can command the services of two assistants, the trick may be brought to a startling conclusion as follows: Two black threads of the same length are beforehand laid on the floor, right across the stage from wing to wing. Each pair of ends is attached to a little wooden rod, in such manner that the two threads shall lie parallel, and be about five inches

apart. At the proper moment, each rod is taken charge of by an assistant at the wing, and the threads thereby lifted and brought forward till they lie across the table. Each of the holders then draws the threads he holds somewhat apart, and the performer, in replacing the hat, just examined, on the table (in this case crown downwards) does so in such manner that it shall rest (standing sideways to the audience) between the threads. These are now lifted till they rest just under the brim, and then drawn taut. By appropriate manipulation of the threads by the two assistants, the hat may be made to fall over with its mouth towards the spectators, to resume its former position, then to fall over backwards, and finally to rise a foot or so in the air, in obedience to the commands of the performer, who contents himself with making mesmeric passes at it from a distance, and obviously takes no personal part in producing its mysterious evolutions.

When the trick is at an end, the performer simply picks up the hat, and restores it to its owner. The double thread is moved as far back as the arrangement of the wings will permit, and is then laid on the floor, as at first. Or, if preferred, one of the assistants may cut or break the two threads at his end, when it can be drawn clean away by the other.

A BILLIARD CUE PRODUCED FROM A HAT.

The production of a barber's pole from a hat could hardly be described as a novelty, being, in fact, one of the oldest tricks in the *répertoire* of the conjurer, and having from time immemorial formed part of the regular business of the jack-pudding at a country fair-

But the same idea is still utilized in more up-to-date forms. The roll of paper, which, when pulled out from its centre, represented the historic "pole," now, a little smaller and differently coloured, does duty as a billiard cue, two or three of which may be drawn from a hat in succession. The collapsible walking-stick, a spiral strip of lacquered steel, working on the same principle, though originally introduced as a mere curiosity, has been pressed into the service of the conjurer, who "produces" it from his own mouth or from a borrowed hat with equal facility. One of the latest and best productions in this particular line, however, is that of an umbrella. This is a speciality of the French conjurer, Clement de Lion. The umbrella employed would not be of much use in a shower, for it has no ribs, though their presence is suggested by neat "tips" in the usual position. The secret lies in the fact that the stick is telescopic, and when this is closed the whole packs into a very small compass, and may be loaded into the hat without difficulty. Naturally, such an umbrella cannot be "put up."

METHODS OF LOADING A HAT.

At this point I may pause to mention one or two expedients, more or less novel, for "loading" a hat. For the knowledge of the following useful little artifice to cover a "load," I am indebted to Mr. John Hamley.

The intended "load" rests on a servante, behind a chair. The performer, unknown to the audience, has a billiard ball palmed, while another is in view upon the table. After showing the hat empty, he turns it mouth downwards upon the chair, at the same time

introducing under it the palmed ball. Then, taking the visible ball, and performing one or two "passes" with it, he finally decides to pass it under the hat. Vanishing it by any one of the many methods at his disposal, he lifts the hat with the right hand, and rests it for a brief moment on the back of the chair. All eyes naturally go to the ball on the chair, to verify the fact of its arrival, and meanwhile the operator has ample time to introduce the load.

Where the nature of the load permits, the servante may be dispensed with, and the parcel suspended, by means of a loop of string or wire, from a hook, or, better still, from a straight pin pointing obliquely upwards, behind the chair. (See page 23.) A mere upward sweep of the hat will then suffice to make the load fall into it.

Another method of hat-loading, suitable for comparatively small objects, may here be mentioned. The article to be loaded is placed under the vest. The performer, holding the hat by the brim with both hands in front of him, makes believe to stretch it, under pretence that it needs to be made a little larger for the purpose of the trick. While thus holding it to him, and apparently pulling at the sides, he draws in his stomach, and the vested article, thereby released, slips into the hat.

Yet another neat hat load may be effected as follows: The load is suspended, we will say, by means of a wire ring from a sloping point at the back of a chair, as above described. Taking the half-sheet of a newspaper, the performer shows it carelessly on both sides, and

lays it over the back of the chair. He next borrows a hat, which he shows to be empty. He then picks up the piece of paper, grasping it by the edge which projects behind the back of the chair, and lays it over the mouth of the hat. As the reader will have surmised, in picking up the paper he has likewise picked up the load, and by the time the paper has settled down on the mouth of the hat the load is safely within it.

But there are two ways of effecting this object. The paper may be picked up with the thumb above and the fingers underneath, in which case the middle finger finds its way into the ring and lifts the load off its peg. The other, and more natural-looking way, is to pick up the paper with the fingers uppermost. In this case it must be clipped between the first and third fingers above (brought close together) and the middle finger below, while the thumb lifts the load off the ring. After the load has been secured, the more deliberate the performer is in bringing the paper over the hat, and dropping the load into it, the better.

HALF A DOZEN BABIES FROM A HAT.

The production of a doll from a hat is very old "business," but the production of half a dozen babies, in long clothes, not far short of natural size, is a comparative novelty. The construction of the babies is as simple as it is ingenious. The head of the child is of cotton cloth, normally kept distended by a double spiral spring, exactly resembling, save in point of size, the springs whereon the familiar "multiplying balls" are constructed. The features of a face are

painted on the globe thus formed, and a muslin frill sewn round it to represent a cap. Below this head is attached the needful amount of thin muslin to represent a nightgown.

To prepare it for use, the head of the unfortunate infant is crushed flat, and the drapery folded, zigzag-fashion, upon it. Half a dozen such dolls, thus folded, and tied together, may be introduced into the hat at one load.

This production hardly belongs to the "high art" of conjuring, but always goes down well with a juvenile audience; and, as illustrating how the less may, on occasion, contain the greater, will be found rather surprising, even by children of older growth.

CLOCKS PRODUCED FROM A HAT.

Among the various articles which have been arranged for production from a hat, few are more effective than American clocks, of the "nutmeg" variety, with "alarm" complete, as illustrated in Fig. 187. Of these, five, or even six, can be introduced at one load. They have necessarily to be graded down in point of size, which in a general way discounts the effect of such a trick a good deal, as suggesting that the smaller samples are packed (as is the fact) within the larger. But in the present case the projection, from each clock, of two legs, and a gong at top, seems to exclude this idea.

As a matter of fact, the clocks *are* packed one within the other. The innermost and smallest clock is the only genuine one. The others are mere shells with slots in their sides, to allow passage for the feet and

the stems of the gongs of those within them. The set of clocks, when "nested," appear as depicted in Fig. 188. The outermost clock is usually first produced, and immediately proves its genuineness by starting a vigorous alarm. This effect is produced by having, at the back of the performer's table, the essential parts of a genuine alarm clock, the train being set in motion by electricity or otherwise.

Some performers have even gone so far as to have five alarms behind or inside the table, a fresh one being



FIG. 187.



FIG. 188.

set in motion as each clock is produced. When all are sounding at once, the effect can be better imagined than described. This, however, is carrying realism to a needless extent.

The last clock, being a going concern, has its own alarm, which can be started by a touch from the performer. This, being brought forward to the company, at once proves its good faith by sounding a tocsin in their midst.

The production of the larger clocks first is the usual order of things, but it seems to me open to objection. A conjurer should always proceed *de plus fort en plus*

fort; and the production of a diminishing series of anything goes against this principle. The smallest clock should be first produced, and brought forward to prove its genuineness. This being placed on the table, the others, gradually larger and larger in size, should be produced, and as the first certainly has, and each of these apparently has, its own alarm, any doubt as to their being real clocks is much less likely to suggest itself.

FLOWER-BALLS FROM A HAT.

This is a more up-to-date development of the now well-known flower trick of Buatier de Kolta.¹

A number of balls of tissue paper, six and a half inches in diameter, and combining in each all the colours of the rainbow, are produced from a borrowed hat. As many as a couple of dozen may be introduced at a single load, and when produced and hung about the stage produce an effect of extraordinary brilliancy. The general effect of each ball is that of a truss of rhododendron; but no rhododendron, outside of fairyland, ever wore the brilliantly assorted colours which these balls exhibit.

To describe the exact principle of their construction is impossible in writing. Their component elements are circular pieces of tissue paper with scalloped edges, as Fig. 189. Of these about a dozen are used for a single ball, but the ingenious way in which they are folded and attached, the one to the other, can only be gathered from minute inspection of the article itself. The finished ball, in a folded condition, is as

¹ *More Magic*, p. 390.

shown in Fig. 190. The loop shown in the diagram is attached to the centre leaflet, while to each of the two outer leaflets is pasted a little flat piece of lead. If



FIG. 189.



FIG. 190.



FIG. 191.

the closed ball is picked up by the loop, each of its sides falls outwards, and the whole assumes the appearance shown in Fig. 191, and retains that form as long as it remains suspended by the loop.

BOUQUETS FROM A HAT.

This is another phase of the same idea, scarcely so good, but useful as a change. When closed, the appearance of the bouquet is as *a* in Fig. 192. The "stem," which is of cardboard, is double, and when

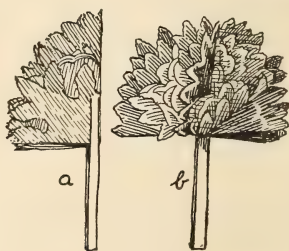


FIG. 192.

opened out and folded back so that the sides originally outermost shall be in contact, the bouquet assumes the form shown as *b* in the same figure.

It is hardly necessary to remark that the flower-ball, or bouquet, as the case may be, is fully developed before it is lifted out of the hat.

Closely allied to the above is

THE GARLAND OF OAK-LEAVES, FOR PRODUCTION FROM A HAT.

The oak-leaves are stamped out of dark green paper, and fastened together in sets of four, with a small hole in the centre, as shown in Fig. 193. A still smaller hole is made with a bodkin in a disc of black or green card-board, the size of a shilling. Through this is passed



FIG. 193.

one end of a piece of thin black silk cord, about a yard and a half long, and secured by a knot, forming a loop, on the opposite side. Over the free end of the cord are threaded a number of the oak-leaves, each group connected with the next by means of a strip of thin, tough paper of the same colour, so that they can be separated to the extent of an inch or so, but not further. The connecting strips do not follow exactly one above the other, but on opposite sides of the cord. When a sufficient number of the oak-leaves have been threaded on the cord, its free end is passed through a hole made transversely through the centre of a little

wooden reel, about an inch and a half in length by three eighths of an inch in diameter, where it is secured by another knot and loop. The cord is now tightly rolled up on this reel, the oak-leaves being thereby pressed into a compact packet. The reel may either be kept in position by a strip of green paper pasted across it, or by merely turning the oak-leaves down over it, and securing the roll thus made with a rubber ring, or a bit of thread.

When the packet has been got safely into the hat, the performer must in the one case break the strip of paper, or in the other remove the encircling thread. Then, taking hold of the card disc, he slowly raises it from the hat, at the same time shaking the packet. The little reel unrolls and the leaves fall apart into a pretty garland.

Three or four of these may easily be introduced at one load, and, if festooned about the stage by means of the loop at each end, make a very pretty appearance.

The centre hole in each group of leaves must be large enough to let the cord pass through freely. The weighting with lead foil of the final leaf, *i. e.*, the one which comes nearest the roller end of the cord, will make the garland develop itself with greater ease and certainty.

A CAKE BAKED IN A HAT. (IMPROVED METHOD.)

The cooking of a cake or pudding in a hat is one of the oldest of conjuring tricks. The old-fashioned way of doing this was described in *Modern Magic*,¹ but

¹ Page 312.

the method in question has long since been abandoned, mainly by reason that the jannaped receptacle used for the mixing of the ingredients was like no other earthly vessel, and was therefore violently suggestive of that "preparation" which every respectable wizard so sedulously disclaims. The trick is, however, for the sake of its result, one keenly appreciated by the juveniles, and it is still now and then exhibited, though in more artistic fashion.

In one of the amended versions of the trick, an ordinary white earthenware jar is substituted for the abnormal piece of tinware in which the ingredients were formerly mixed. The inner receptacle in this

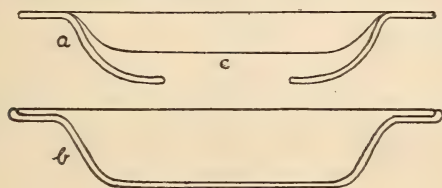


FIG. 194.

case remains as before, save that it is adapted in point of shape and size to the jar, and that it has, riveted on each side, a short piece of clock-spring to make it bind within the latter.

A more up-to-date piece of apparatus for working the trick is a nickel-plated salver, about six inches in diameter and one inch deep, as shown in section in Fig. 194. As will be gathered from the diagram, the apparatus in reality consists of *two* salvers, though when the upper, *a*, is fitted into the lower, *b*, the two appear as one. The former is half an inch shallower internally than it is externally, so that there is a space between

the inner and outer walls, to which space a circular opening, *c*, gives access.

To show the trick, a cake of suitable size and shape, and slightly warmed, is laid in *a*, and the two are simultaneously loaded into a borrowed hat. They should be so introduced that the opening, *c*, of the salver is brought uppermost. The outer salver, *b*, is exhibited openly on the performer's table. Into this an egg is broken. The other needful ingredients (in very small quantity) are added, and the resulting mixture is poured into the hat (actually into *c*). Just as the last drops trickle down, *b* is lowered, upside down, on to *a*, and the two brought up as one, and put aside; after which the cake is in due course produced and consumed.

Where the performer has command of a stage of his own, an episode of a very comical character may easily be introduced. Having duly "loaded" the hat, the performer places it on a cane-bottomed chair, where it rests while he pours the cake mixture into it. No sooner, however, has he done so, than, to the amusement of all present (except the owner of the hat), a stream of liquid paste is seen to trickle down from the hat through the seat of the chair, and settle on the floor. That there has been an accident is only too painfully obvious. The performer simulates the natural amount of distress, keeping up the agony as long as his dramatic talent will admit, but of course all comes right in the end.

This startling effect is produced by the aid of the little appliance depicted in Fig. 195. It is of blackened tin, and is in the shape of a shallow funnel, closed

at top, and about three inches in outside diameter. A couple of hooks, *a a*, serve to attach it to the seat of the chair. The mouth, which is fairly wide, is closed by a cork, *b*, to which is attached one end of a thread, *c*, the opposite end of which is led away, through a screw-eye fixed in the floor, to the hand of an assistant behind the scenes. The funnel is filled with a mixture of flour and water, of the consistency

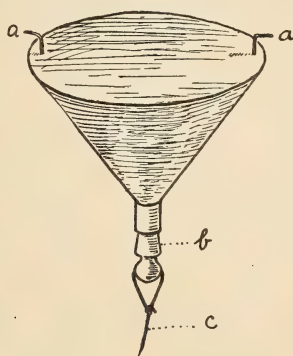


FIG. 195.

of cream. A pull upon the thread draws out the cork, with the result already described.

If the performer works single-handed, it is a very simple matter so to arrange the thread that he himself can draw the cork at the proper moment.

THE WANDERING ORANGES.

The effect of this trick, which is the invention of a German wizard named Curiel, is as follows: A couple of hats are borrowed, and each placed on a separate table, some little distance apart. Both have been

shown empty, but at the conjurer's command hat No. 1 becomes filled with oranges. These he transfers, one by one, to hat No. 2, and again shows No. 1 empty. When, however, he takes up No. 2, that too is found to be empty, the oranges having, somehow or other, found their way back to No. 1.

The marvel must be discounted a little by the admission that the oranges are not of the eatable kind, but are in fact (with one exception, to be hereafter referred to) the familiar spring-balls, covered in imitation of the golden fruit. Of these the performer has a dozen, duly compressed and tied, vested on each side. A genuine orange reposes in the right pochette. Of the two hats used, that which we have called No. 1 is the ordinary "chimney-pot," handed up by a *bonâ-fide* lender. No. 2 is a faked article, so arranged that one half of the crown can be folded inwards on the other half, leaving a semicircular opening. This is entrusted to a confederate among the audience, who hands it up at the proper moment.¹

One of the two tables,—the one standing, we will say, on the right hand as viewed by the audience,—has no preparation. The other is a "trap"-table, with a "pull" arrangement whereby an assistant behind the scenes (or the performer himself if he works single-handed) can open the trap at pleasure.

Having borrowed the two hats, the performer in returning to the stage loads into No. 1 (the unprepared hat) one of his packets of sham oranges. This is placed on the right-hand table. He then proceeds to place hat No. 2 on the left-hand table, in so doing

¹ This is a weak point in an otherwise clever trick. A conjurer should be independent of all outside assistance.

turning back the flap portion of the crown, and so placing it that the opening shall be directly over the trap.

After a little appropriate patter, he returns to hat No. 1. To his pretended surprise, he finds that there is something in it. Loosening the string, he produces an orange, and another, and another. Picking up hat No. 1 he walks across to hat No. 2, and places the oranges one by one therein, the natural result being that they pass down the trap and into the body of the table. When the supply is exhausted, he shows hat No. 1 empty, and while doing so palms the genuine orange from the pochette. Transferring the hat from the one hand to the other, he introduces the orange, and a moment later, turning the hat accordingly, allows it to fall out (which it does with an audible thud) and to roll along the floor towards the spectators. "Dear me!" he says, gazing into the empty crown, "now I wonder where that could have come from! It must have been between the hat and the lining. Or perhaps it is a later sort of orange, and took a little longer to materialize. Anyhow, we will put it with the rest." So saying, he drops it into hat No. 2, and replaces No. 1 in its original position, having, however, in the meantime loaded into it the second packet of sham oranges, for doing which the little interlude with the real one has given him ample opportunity, besides proving, by conjurer's logic, that all are the genuine article.

The next stage of the trick is the return of the oranges to hat No. 1. The performer must, of course, suggest by his patter some reason to account for this, and here he has a good opportunity to exhibit any

dramatic talent he may possess. His harangue may run somewhat as follows:

"This curious effect, ladies and gentlemen, is produced by magnetic attraction. No, sir" (to an imaginary interrupter), "I did *not* say hattraction. I notice, by the way, that I always succeed best with the hat of a rather hot-headed gentleman. You see, oranges come from warm climates, and they won't germinate in a cold one. I tried this experiment once with a gentleman's hat, and instead of oranges I got oysters. I found out afterwards that the owner of the hat had water on the brain. Of course that accounted for it. To-night, happily, all has gone well. The orange crop is a success. Did any one notice, by the way, how many we got? I quite forgot to count them, but we will do so now."

He moves towards hat No. 2, and dips his hand in, as if to take out an orange, and in so doing closes the flap. Finding nothing, he puts on a look of surprise, and gazes into the hat.

"Hallo!" he says, holding it up and showing it empty, "how is this? Surely I put the oranges into this hat. Now where are they gone?" As if struck by a sudden thought, he crosses over, and looks into hat No. 1. "I see how it is, the owner of this hat is the hotter-headed gentleman of the two; and so the oranges have all come back again." Loosening the string which confines the oranges, he shows the hat again full. "Well, all's well that ends well. Here, John" (to assistant), "we won't take any chances this time. Just take these oranges, and cut them up on a plate, for the refreshment of these ladies and gentlemen."

The hat is after a brief interval brought back empty, and with it a plateful of genuine oranges, cut in quarters, which are offered to the company, again proving, after the usual fashion, that there is "no deception."

A GLASS OF WINE PASSED VISIBLY THROUGH THE CROWN OF A HAT.

This very ingenious trick is the invention of Herr Conradi, of Dresden. It would be difficult to surpass it in point of magical effect. Its only drawback is that

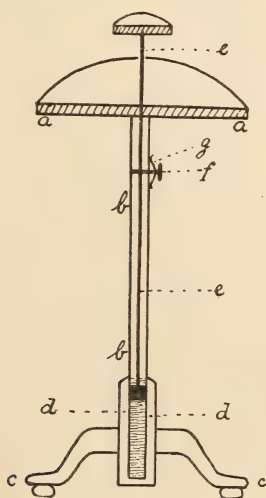


FIG. 196.

a special table, of rather intricate construction (see sectional view, Fig. 196), is needed for its exhibition.

The table top, *aa*, is of glass, about twelve inches in diameter, and a third of an inch thick. It is supported by an elegant brass column, *bb*, terminating at bottom in a tripod base, *cc*. The lower part, *dd*, of the column,

to a height of about six inches, is double the diameter of the upper portion, and is, in fact, a hollow cylinder, filled with water. The upper part of the column is likewise hollow, and through it passes a slender brass rod, *ee*, to the upper part of which is fixed a glass disc, corresponding in diameter with that of the mouth of the glass used in the trick. The lower end of this rod terminates in a wooden plug, loosely fitting the cylinder, *dd*. There is a slot, exactly corresponding in length with the height of the glass, in one side of the tube, *bb*. A pin, screwed at right angles into the upright rod, projects through this to the extent of an inch or so, terminating in a little brass knob, *f*. Between the knob and the side of the tube is a spring, *g*, which, when the screw is turned, increases or diminishes the pressure of the rod against the sides of the tube, and consequently the facility with which it can be moved therein.

When the table is first seen on the stage, the rod *ee* is pressed down to the utmost, the disc resting flat on the table top, and so being invisible. The friction of the rod is so regulated that by placing a finger under the set screw, *f*, the disc can be readily moved upwards, but will not sink down again by its own weight, though a very slight additional pressure will make it do so.

In conjunction with the table is used a clear glass tumbler with its upper edges ground flat, and having a flat lid or cover, likewise of clear glass. This is shouldered, so that when dropped upon the top of the glass it cannot shift laterally (see Fig. 197). As the reader is, no doubt, aware, a glass filled with water, and so covered, may be turned upside down, or moved

in any direction, without fear of spilling the liquid, the pressure of the air keeping the cover in position, however loosely it may fit. The cover in question is in the first instance laid on the top of a wide-mouthed decanter, containing wine or other red liquid.

Thus provided, the performer is ready to show the trick, in describing which I cannot do better than follow, at a respectful distance, the lines of the patter used by the inventor himself. I say "at a distance," because, like Mr. Silas Wegg, Herr Conradi now and then "drops into poetry," a region into which I will not venture to follow him.

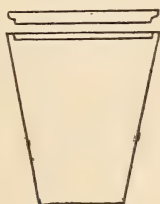


FIG. 197.

"Ladies and gentlemen, it is the custom nowadays for a conjurer to offer everything for examination. I will ask you, therefore, to examine this glass. I wish you to be quite satisfied, first, that it doesn't fold up in any way; and, secondly, that this particular glass, and no other, is used throughout the trick. I shall therefore be much obliged if you will mark it in some way, the only restriction being that you return it to me whole. Here are some sealing-wax and a lighted taper. I dare say some one will oblige me with the loan of a signet ring, when it can be marked to your complete satisfaction."

The glass being duly marked and returned, he continues as follows:

"In order still further to exclude any possible chance of my exchanging or spiriting it away, I will fill it to the brim with this fine old Burgundy."

In picking up the decanter he rests the right hand for a moment over its mouth, and palms off the glass cover, which was deposited thereon. After he has filled the glass, he puts down the decanter, and presently transfers the glass from the left hand to the right. In so doing he brings the right hand over the top, and lowers the cover into position upon it; being transparent, it remains invisible.

"I have filled the glass almost too full. Now, with due precaution not to spill any of the precious fluid, I will place it on this little table, while I endeavour to obtain the loan of a tall hat and a lady's pocket-handkerchief. I thank you. With the handkerchief I cover the glass, so—What! you think I have taken away the glass! No, here it is." (He shows it, and again covers it.) "I fear, by the way, that some of you ladies and gentlemen at the side cannot see very well. I will move the table a little farther forward. Now you will have a better view."

This is a critical stage of the trick. On depositing the glass of wine on the table, he places it a little in front of the glass disc, which therefore has room to rise behind it. In lifting the table, he grasps the central column, holding it very lightly, immediately beneath the check-screw, *f*. The first effect of lifting the hand, therefore, is to force *f* upwards, thereby elevating the disc to a level with the top of the glass (at which point it for the time being remains). So soon,

however, as *f* reaches its uttermost point, the upward pressure of the hand operates upon the table itself, which the performer proceeds to move forward a foot or two.

"Ah!" he says, after having done this, "I can see that some of you again imagine that I have taken away the glass. Let me show you once more that you are mistaken."

So saying, with the left hand he raises the handkerchief at the back, the front edge still resting on the table, and with the right hand holds up and exhibits the glass. He then replaces it, apparently in the same position, but in reality now places it *behind* the glass disc, and drops the handkerchief loosely over the latter. The spectators naturally believe that the handkerchief still covers the glass, though the glass is in reality behind and outside it. Next, taking the hat, and carelessly showing it, he continues:

"Now I am going to make this glass disappear. There are two ways of doing it, and I will adopt whichever you like. One is to do it invisibly, in which case I shall cover it with the hat, *so*." Here, suiting the action to the word, he places the hat, mouth downwards, over the handkerchief, but immediately lifts it, and loads into it the covered glass from behind the handkerchief.

"Or I can do it visibly, in which case I turn the hat *so*, and leave the glass in full view. Which shall it be?"

At this point he places the hat, crown downwards, on the top of the supposed glass, but does not let go of it until the decision of the audience is announced. There is, however, only one possible answer in such

a case as above suggested. Spectators always want to see all they can, and will never consent to have a given effect produced under cover if they have the alternative of seeing it done, as they imagine, openly. The answer is always, therefore, "Visibly." On receiving the popular mandate the performer removes his hand from the hat. "Now, ladies and gentlemen, watch carefully, and you will see the glass of wine gradually pass through the crown of the hat. How it is done, I don't profess to tell you, but you will see that that is what happens. See, the glass is beginning to melt away already."

The trick is now done. The extra weight on the glass disc forces it slowly downward, the water in the cylinder, *d d*, acting as a check, and preventing its sinking too rapidly. When the glass disc has quite reached the level of the table, the performer picks up the hat, and dipping his hand into it, removes and palms the glass top, and produces the glass of wine, which is identified by the seal upon it.

The illusion is one demanding a considerable amount of address, but is not really so difficult as many which do not possess a tenth part of its effectiveness.

THE VANISHED CANNON-BALL.

It is easy enough, as every conjurer knows, to produce a cannon-ball from a hat, but if the wizard were asked to make it disappear again he would usually be compelled to admit that there are things which even a magician cannot do. A little device of Herr Willmann's, however, makes such an achievement not only possible, but easy.

The ball used is of solid wood, with a hole bored in it. It is introduced into the hat from the servante after the usual fashion, and allowed to drop on the floor, to prove by the resulting "thud" that it is the real thing, and not some hollow imitation. The only point in which it differs from the old-fashioned ball used for the same purpose is that the bore is not cylindrical, but slightly tapering. In conjunction with it is used a wooden plug, exactly corresponding to the hole, and, if pressed into it, fitting tightly.¹ This plug is of such a size that it only penetrates into the ball to the extent of two thirds of its length, and the remaining portion is fashioned into a round knob, for use in pulling it out again when the trick is over. Through the length of the plug a small hole is bored, and through this is threaded a piece of thin but strong black cord, about two feet long, secured by a knot at the smaller end of the plug.

The free end of the cord is led through a hole, made for the purpose, on the inside of the left vest pocket of the performer, and secured to the nearest of his brace buttons. The plug is deposited in the same pocket, in such manner as to be easily withdrawn, and a small portion of the cord is allowed to form a loop outside.

Thus provided, the performer produces the ball from a hat, as above mentioned. This done, he looks about for something to wrap it up in. A good-sized cloth, say a table-cover or small shawl, happens (!) to be thrown over a chair or the like, ready to his hand. He wraps the ball in this; then, holding it with both hands, makes

¹ It will be found a decided advantage to have either the hole lined or the plug covered with *cork*, in which case a very moderate degree of pressure will make the two fit tightly together.

the motion of throwing it into the air, and instantly shakes out the cloth. The ball has vanished. He shows the cloth on both sides, draws it through his hands, and finally throwing it over his shoulder, makes his bow, and retires.

As the reader will doubtless have guessed, the performer, while turning his back to get the cloth, gets the plug from his pocket and drives it home in the ball. When wrapping the ball in the cloth, he takes care that the side towards his own body shall be uncovered. The upward throwing movement is not a mere make-believe, but a reality, for the ball passes over his left shoulder, where it hangs suspended by the cord. The subsequent throwing of the cloth over the same shoulder conceals it, and enables him to make a dignified and graceful exit.

CHAPTER XII.

MISCELLANEOUS TRICKS.

THE present section will be devoted to a few tricks of some special interest, which, according to the classification I have adopted, could not properly be included in either of the preceding chapters.

First and foremost we will take the pretty little drawing-room trick, entitled—

THE AFGHAN BANDS.

The requirements for this trick consist of a pair of sharp-pointed scissors and three or four strips of white paper, each five or six feet long and one inch (or thereabouts) in width, pasted together at the ends so as to form endless bands. The familiar telegraph paper answers the purpose very well. The performer comes forward with these bands strung on his left arm. Taking them one by one in the right hand and showing that they are all separate, he lays them on a table or chair, or, if he prefers it, hangs them round his neck. Then, taking one of them, he makes a hole with the scissors in the centre of its width, and, handing the paper and scissors to some spectator, asks him to continue from the hole thus made, and divide the strip throughout its whole length. This done, the paper

naturally takes the form of two endless bands, the same length as the original, but only half the width, as *aa* in Fig. 198.

The performer takes one in each hand and looks at them sadly. "This is all wrong. I didn't want the two rings separated. I wanted them linked one within the other. You couldn't do that? Ah! you are evidently not a conjurer. If you had been a conjurer you would have just whispered softly to yourself

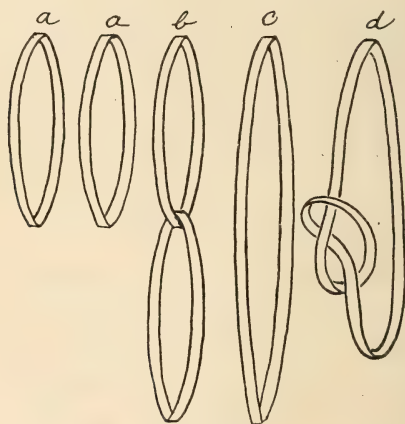


FIG. 198.

'Aldiboronticophosphikoformio!' and the result would have been quite different. See!" With these words he takes the second band, perforates it with the scissors, and divides it lengthways like the other. Two bands are again formed, but the one is linked within the other, as *b* in the figure.

"You look incredulous, ladies and gentlemen. You don't believe my magic formula had anything to do

with it? Really, you are very sceptical. I cut the paper fairly, did I not? However, I can easily convince you. We will try the experiment over again, and this time I will use a still stronger form of incantation, when we shall naturally get an even more remarkable result. *Cryptoconchoidosyphonostomata!* You had better make a note of that word. You'll find it very useful in cases of this kind. Now I will divide this third band in the same way as the others. But the effect will now be quite different. This time, you see, we have one long continuous band." (See *c* in Fig. 198).

The secret lies in the making up of the paper bands. The first is a perfectly ordinary band, one end being brought fairly round and pasted on to the other. In the second case the strip of paper is twisted, half round, before the ends are pasted together. In the third case it is twisted fully round before the ends are joined. If yet another twist be given to it before joining, the band when cut will appear as *d* in the figure.

The chief point the novice has to bear in mind in preparing the bands is to have them long enough. The longer they are, the less likely is the twisting of the band in the last three cases to attract attention.

THE CHINESE PAPER-TEARING TRICK.

This trick was introduced to the public by Ching Ling Foo, a Mongolian conjurer, who a year or two back made a great hit in America; so much so, indeed, as to induce more than one of his Western *confrères* to drop their own nationality, and, with pigtail and

flowery robe complete, to present their illusions in the character of the "Heathen Chinees."¹

The trick in question is of the simplest kind, both in effect and in execution, consisting merely in tearing a strip of paper into small pieces, rolling them between the fingers, and reproducing in a single strip as at first. But its very simplicity constitutes its charm, and it has achieved extraordinary popularity, both with the public and among performers.

By way of introduction it may not be out of place to describe a little drawing-room trick (I believe, of Japanese origin), of which the paper-tearing appears to be merely a later development. In general effect it is precisely the same, save that a needleful of red cotton takes the place of the strip of paper. The performer takes this by one end, between the forefinger and the thumb of the right hand. With the other hand he picks up the opposite end, and brings the two together so as to form a hanging loop. Some one is invited to snip this loop at its lowest point with a pair of scissors. The two hanging ends are picked up as before, now forming a double loop, and the thread is again cut, the cutting being repeated as long as the length of the fragments permits of their being doubled at all.

When this point is reached, the performer rolls the

¹ Foremost among these is the genial American wizard, W. E. Robinson ("Chung Ling Soo"), whose truly Chinese smile, "child-like and bland," and the perfection of whose make-up have deceived thousands into the belief that he is a genuine Mongolian.

The majority of the so-called Chinese tricks are very poor, judged by a Western standard, but in "Chung Ling Soo's" hands they never fail to please even the most critical audience; a fresh illustration of the never-to-be-forgotten truth, that a conjuring trick is just *what the performer makes it*.

I propose here to describe the same trick, but with one or two little additions of my own which I have found to enhance its interest.

The only requirements are a candlestick and lighted candle, and a piece of tin-foil, rolled into a fairly solid ball, about five eighths of an inch in diameter. This is suspended just under the vest, a little to the left of the buttons, by means of a black pin thrust downward through the cloth from the outside, and then into the foil. Thus suspended, the ball hangs quite securely, though a mere touch suffices to draw it off the pin, and into the hand.

The patter which I myself was accustomed to use for this trick ran somewhat as follows:

"Ladies and gentlemen, the little experiment I am about to show you is one for which we are indebted to the ancient alchemists. People look down upon the alchemists nowadays, because they didn't know anything about bicycles, or the income tax, or the New Woman, or our other modern improvements. They had the pull of us, however, in the knowledge of many useful little scientific dodges, particularly in dealing with metals. It is one of these processes which I propose to show you.

"I shall begin by borrowing half a crown. I don't know whether the ancient alchemists began like this, but I dare say they did, for philosophers have been an impecunious lot in all ages. Mark the coin, please, so that you may know it again. You have marked it? Next, please, mark—what I do.

"Silver, as you are no doubt aware, is one of the hardest of the metals, and in a general way requires a very high temperature to melt it, but by the aid of a

few mesmeric passes, properly applied, I can so soften it that it will melt even in the flame of this candle. Without the aid of magic, you might hold half-crowns over candles till doomsday without any result (except burning your fingers), but the alchemist's little dodge makes all the difference. Observe, I merely take the coin, and submit it to a little mesmeric friction. As Shakespeare says (referring, no doubt, to this experiment), "There's the rub." It is a very little one, as you observe, and yet the effect of even such a little rub as that is that the half-crown at once begins to get softer. See, I can bend it. Another



FIG. 200.

little rub, and now, you see, it bends nearly in half. Yet another little rub, and it is softer still, and when I hold it over the candle it melts away, right into the flame, and disappears."

At this stage a little explanation may be desirable. The performer first shows the coin in the right hand. He then transfers it to the left hand, letting it lie flat on the middle joints of the second and third fingers, and rubs it with the fingers of the right. He then takes it back into the right hand, professedly to try whether it is getting soft. After the second or third rubbing (warming the coin over the candle flame after each) he takes the coin between the two hands as shown in Fig. 200, and by bending the knuckles over

towards each other, and back again, appears to bend the coin, after the fashion in which a borrowed watch is often dealt with by conjurers.¹ The illusion is not quite so perfect with a coin, but it is good enough for all practical purposes.

After showing the coin in this apparently softened condition, the performer once more makes the movement of transferring the coin from the right hand to the left, but this time with a difference. He retains it by the "finger palm," as shown in Fig. 201, between the first and second fingers, but, still with the tips of

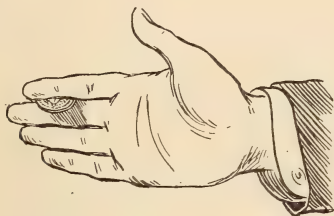


FIG. 201.

these same fingers, rubs the fingers of the left hand as if the coin were lying upon them. At this stage of the proceedings, he should be so standing as to have the candlestick on his left. Making a half-turn, he picks this up with the right hand, between the thumb and first and second fingers, and, holding the left hand over it, makes a rubbing motion with the fingers, as if reducing the coin to powder in the flame. He then faces round and *shows both hands empty*, for if he has closely followed the above directions the coin in the finger palm, lying horizontally, is completely masked by the thumb holding the candlestick (see Fig. 202),

¹ *Modern Magic*, p. 214.

and no one, unless looking directly down upon the hand could possibly detect its presence.¹

"Now I dare say you are thinking to yourselves that this is a rather expensive experiment. I know the gentleman who lent me the half-crown is thinking so. And so it would be, if the coin was altogether lost. Fortunately, however, there is a way of getting all the silver back again. Of course, it won't be quite in its original shape, but that's a secondary consideration. Let me call your attention to a little red point at the

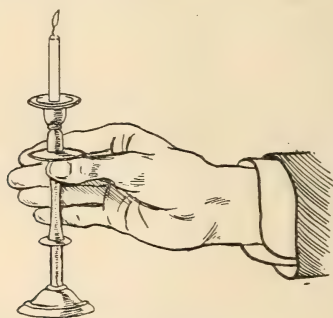


FIG. 202.

top of the wick. That is the coin, in a state of fusion. I take it out, so" [he nips the top of the flame with finger and thumb]. "Here it is, you see! What! you don't see? Perhaps not, just at first, but you will as the metal begins to cool. It soon solidifies. Here is your half-crown, sir, with many thanks."

What is actually offered is the tin-foil ball. When the performer calls attention to the imaginary red

¹ The candlestick used should be one with a somewhat slender stem. It should in any case be grasped by its narrowest portion, as the nearer the thumb approaches the fingers, the more perfect is the cover for the coin.

spot in the candle flame, he moves the candlestick with a semicircular sweep towards the left, as if to allow the spectators on that side a better view of it. Under cover of this movement, and while all eyes are directed to the supposed red spot in the flame, he gets the foil ball from under the vest into the left hand, and rolls it with the thumb between the second and third fingers. He then makes believe, with this same hand, to nip the flame as above described. When he first professes to show the metal, he keeps the ball concealed by the thumb, but by virtue of a rubbing movement gradually works it to the tips of the fingers. He then, for the first time, puts down the candlestick, and offers the ball to the lender of the half-crown, who naturally declines to receive his money back in such a condition.

“What do you say, sir? You don’t care for it in this shape? I assure you it is much more valuable in this condition. Anybody can own a common half-crown, but very few people possess a quaint little silver ornament like this. Just the thing to hang on your watch-chain! No? You would rather have it in its original condition? Well, there’s no accounting for tastes. I’ll do my best. I dare say I can flatten it out a bit for you.” Here he brings the hands together, and in so doing lodges the ball between the second and third fingers of the *right* hand. He then begins to flatten out, professedly the ball, but really the actual coin, working it round and round between the fingers, and gradually allowing the edges to be seen. “We’re getting on, it’s nearly flat now. If I can put a bit of a pattern on it, it will be all right.”

He manipulates it a little longer, and then shows it

on the palm of the right hand, or, strictly speaking, partly on the palm and partly on the fingers, in such manner that it lies just over the foil ball, and so conceals it. After showing the coin for a moment in the right hand, he transfers it to the left, and returns it to the owner, with the remark that he fears the design hasn't come out quite so clearly as could be wished, but no doubt he will be able to pass it on a dark evening.

The points in which the present version differs from Robert-Houdin's are the following:

1. The introduction of the "bending" sleight, showing that the coin is getting soft.
2. The use of the finger palm in place of the ordinary palm, enabling the performer to show the interior of both hands immediately after the disappearance of the coin.
3. The use of the foil ball, serving as an additional proof that the coin is actually melted.

THE GREAT DICTIONARY TRICK.

The trick which goes by this name was invented by my ingenious friend Mr. Maskelyne, and when first produced at the Egyptian Hall, now a good many years ago, produced an immense sensation. My own version differs in sundry particulars from the original, having been altered and amended from time to time, as improvements, or supposed improvements, suggested themselves. The root-idea of the trick is that a word is selected, haphazard, from a dictionary, in a manner that precludes all possibility of collusion, and that the magician then discovers such word, and reveals his knowledge of it in some striking way.

I will begin by giving the patter I was accustomed to use for the trick (which will, I think, be found to be self-explanatory), and follow it with a description of the means employed. I may here mention, by the way, that the dictionary I used was a penny one, in paper covers, and that of this a dozen or more copies were distributed at the proper time among the spectators.

“My next experiment, ladies and gentlemen, will be that known as The Great Dictionary Feat. When this experiment was first produced, it was conducted rather differently from the present plan. A dictionary was handed to a lady, who opened it and selected a word at her pleasure, and the word so chosen was in due course revealed. But it was soon found that that wouldn't do. Everybody imagined that the poor innocent lady was a sister, or a cousin, or an aunt of the performer; at any rate a confederate of some sort, and the feat lost all its effect. Consequently, the mode of proceeding has been changed. The choice of the word is now made a matter of pure chance, and, still further to prove that there is no possibility of collusion, the choice is divided between three different persons, one person deciding where the dictionary is to be opened, a second whether the right or the left-hand page shall be taken, and a third what particular word on that page shall be named.

“I use, for the sake of portability, a little dictionary known as *Knight's Penny Dictionary*. It contains only 10,000 words, so your choice will be limited to that number, but I may tell you, truthfully, that the difficulty of the feat is not in the least affected by the size of the dictionary. I could use the Imperial, or the Century, or Cassell's Encyclopædic, but they

wouldn't be so handy to pass round. There is another advantage about having small dictionaries. Instead of one, I am able to have a dozen or more copies, which will be distributed among you, so that as many as possible may take part in the experiment.

"First, as to where the dictionary shall be opened. Will you, madam, be kind enough to decide that point by taking this paper-knife, and thrusting it in just where you please between the leaves." [The performer offers a copy of the dictionary, closed. The paper-knife is thrust between the leaves, and the whole handed to the lady.] "Thank you, madam; now please take the book in your own hands. Keep the knife just as it is. Don't open the book just yet, or allow any one else to do so.

"Next, to decide whether we are to take the right or the left-hand page. Put it to the vote, if you like, or perhaps it will be simpler merely to toss for it. Who will volunteer? Thank you, sir. Now then, shall we say, head, right-hand page; and tail, left-hand? Just as you like. . . . Good! Which is it? Head? then we are to take the right-hand page, which is the one bearing the *odd* number. Is that satisfactory? If not, you are still welcome to choose the other.

"Lastly, as to the particular word on that page. Here I have a number of counters" (he offers them on a small nickel-plated salver), "numbered regularly from one up to one hundred and fifty, that being the average number of words on a page. Just see that the counters are all different, and meanwhile, perhaps some one will lend me a hat. Thank you, sir." [The performer takes the hat in his left hand.] "Now will some one take a handful of these coins, and give them

to me? Thank you, I drop them into the hat" (he does so), "and give them a good shake up. Now, sir, will you put in your hand, please, and take out *one* counter. Close your hand tightly upon it.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen, I have to discover the word thus elaborately selected. You will readily see that it is absolutely impossible that I should know it beforehand. In order to discover it in at once the simplest and most mysterious manner possible, I shall invite the spirits (my own special blend of Scotch and Irish) to write it in letters of blood on my bare arm. Allow me first to show you that there is neither word nor letter on it at present." [He bares his arm, and exhibits it on all sides, then draws the sleeve down again.] "I would willingly pass my arm round for inspection, but, unfortunately, it is a fixture.

"Now, madam, will you open the dictionary you hold, and tell us where the paper-knife chanced to be inserted. It opens at pages ——" (as the case may be), "and it was settled that we were to take the right-hand page, which is page —— . . . Now, sir, please look at the counter you selected. What number does it bear? . . . Then all who have dictionaries, please open them and look out the ——th word on the ——th page. Meanwhile, I just take the dictionary and the counter in my hand, and allow the mesmeric influence to flow up my arm."

"The spirits are quicker than you, ladies and gentlemen" (he bares his arm), "for here, in blood-red characters, appears a word. Perhaps somebody will read it. What should it be, please, to correspond with the ——th word on the ——th page of the dictionary? . . . Good. The spirits have done their

work well, for here on my arm, in plain characters, is that same word, ——."

I know no trick of its kind more effective than the foregoing. There does not appear to be even a loop-hole for deception left open; and yet this surprising effect is produced by the simplest of means.

The properties for the trick consist of a dozen (or more if the audience be large) of the small dictionaries, unprepared, and one "special" one, prepared as hereafter described; a small, thin paper-knife; a gross of counters, numbered consecutively from 1 upwards, on a small plated salver, and eight or nine similar counters all bearing the same number, say "24." These last are placed till needed in the left pochette, or in a clip under the left side of the vest.

For the preparation of the special dictionary twenty-eight to thirty ordinary dictionaries have to be sacrificed. These are unstitched and two consecutive leaves, say pages 37, 38, 39, 40, taken out from the middle portion of each. These are then pasted together in couples; page 37 of each pair against page 40 of the preceding pair. Against the foremost page 37 is pasted the first leaf, and against the ultimate page 40 the last leaf of the book, so as to secure a proper beginning and ending. The leaves thus pasted together should be dried in a press, and they must then be sewn together, in one of the original covers, by a bookbinder.¹ The dictionary thus made up will be

¹ The mutilated copies should be carefully preserved, and utilized to make up other "faked" copies, as it would obviously be very unwise for the performer to use a dictionary opening at the same pages evening after evening.

externally just like the rest. It will have a correct first and last page, but wherever it is opened the pagination will be the same, viz., it will always open at pages 38, 39. This is placed at the bottom of the heap of unprepared dictionaries, as they lie on the performer's table.

The performer has further to prepare his own arms. On the left arm, just below the bend of the elbow, he writes, with red ink of good quality, or with Judson's crimson dye, a little diluted, the twenty-fourth word (or otherwise, according to the number intended to be forced) on page 39, being the right-hand page of the faked dictionary. In like manner, he writes or gets somebody to write for him, on the right arm, the twenty-fourth word on the left-hand page (page 38).

Thus prepared, the performer is ready to show the trick. When distributing the dictionaries, which he does more particularly to those spectators in his own immediate neighbourhood, he keeps the undermost (which is the faked one) to the last, and retains this in his own hand. Then, producing the little paper-knife, say from his vest pocket, he asks some lady to thrust it between the leaves. He leaves the book in her possession, the request that she will not open it just yet protecting it from any inconvenient examination. The choice of right or left-hand page makes no difference to him, save that if the *right*-hand page be chosen he will produce the word on his *left* arm, and *vice versa*.

For the forcing of the number a little address is required, but it really presents no difficulty. Before picking up the tray of mixed counters from the table, the performer gets the forcing counters (those bearing

the number 24) into his left hand. Holding the tray in the same hand, these are concealed under the rim. After inviting some one to take a handful of the visible counters, he puts the tray down, and borrows a hat. Receiving it in the right hand, he transfers it to the



FIG. 203.



FIG. 204.

left, which grasps it with fingers inside and thumb outside (just as the hat is held in the familiar "Shower of money" trick). He takes back the handful of counters with the right hand, and apparently drops them into the hat; in reality retaining them clipped against the lower joints of the two middle fingers, and dropping the forcing counters from the left hand into the hat. They are heard to fall, and no one is likely to

in c. A reverse movement brings the thimble from the fork of the thumb to the tip of the finger again. This little sleight is by no means difficult of acquisition, and, if performed with the arm in motion, the smaller movement of the finger is quite invisible. The only point requiring special caution is to keep the hand wherein the thimble is palmed with its *back* towards the audience.

For the performance of the complete trick *two* thimbles are used, but, as it is important that the spectators should not suspect this, it is as well to commence with a few passes in which it can be seen clearly that one

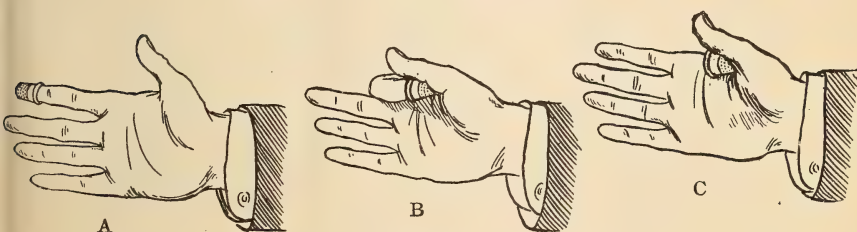


FIG. 206.

thimble only is employed. The second thimble may either be vested, mouth downwards, or placed, mouth upwards, in the left-hand waistcoat pocket; anywhere, in fact, where the performer can get secret possession of it at a moment's notice.

For the moment we will consider that he is working with one thimble only. Placing this on the tip of his right forefinger, he makes the motion of transferring it to the left hand, which forthwith closes as if containing it. As a matter of fact, however, it is thumb-palmed in transit, and it is the bare forefinger only which comes into contact with the left hand. With this same

hand the performer pats himself on the top of the head, and after a momentary pretence of trying to swallow something that won't go down, produces the thimble from his mouth. This sleight is merely the former reversed, the thimble being transferred from the thumb-palm to the finger-tip just as the latter reaches the mouth.

The performer may now apparently place the thimble in the mouth (thumb-palming it as he does so), and reproduce it from his beard under cover of a pretended pull at the latter. If he does not happen to wear a beard, he may with the left hand pick up a lighted candle, blow it out as if blowing the thimble into the candle, and with the right hand reproduce the thimble from underneath the candlestick. If the sleight is neatly worked, the illusion is in each case complete.

Having done as much as he cares to do with the one thimble, he secretly gets the second into the left hand, and proceeds to work with the two.

Space only permits of my giving one or two of the possible "passes." Mr. Devant usually begins the two-thimble work by holding the hands as depicted in Fig. 207, the right hand having at this stage a thimble on the forefinger, and the left a second concealed in the fork of the thumb. He waves the right hand backwards and forwards alternately before and behind the other. As the fingers of the right hand pass out of sight behind the left, the visible thimble is palmed as above described. At the same moment the forefinger of the left hand is bent and again extended with a thimble on it, the effect to the spectators being that it has flown from the one forefinger to the other.

Some of the passes exhibited with the one thimble may be executed still more effectively with two. Thus the thimble may be placed (after the deceptive fashion already described) in the mouth, and reproduced with the other hand from the back of the head. It may then be inserted in one ear and brought out of the other.

Another pretty effect may be produced, the performer being in a seated position, by bringing the



FIG. 207.

hands down thrice with a slap upon the knees, at the same time (after the manner of the "Fly away, Jack; fly away, Jill" of our childhood) saying, "One, two, three!" At the word "three" the thimble passes from the forefinger on which it was first seen to the other.

The principle of the trick once mastered, it will be an easy matter for the amateur to devise passes for himself; though it will probably be some time before he is able to execute them with the ease and finish of the original inventor.

THE THIMBLE AND PAPER CONE.

There is another version of the trick, in which two thimbles of light substance are used, so arranged in point of size that the one shall fit neatly over the other; the two, in such condition, appearing as one.

The two thimbles, one upon the other, are shown together on the forefinger. The performer makes a little cone out of soft paper, trimming its edges level with a pair of scissors. This he places over the visible thimble, "just to try if it fits," as he says. He then takes it off again, and places it on the table. The thimble which was seen on the forefinger still remains there.

He now undertakes to pass this thimble visibly under the cone. He flourishes the right hand over it, and at the same moment thumb-palms the thimble from the finger-tip; immediately picking up the cone, and showing that the thimble (professedly the same) has really passed beneath it.

The reader will hardly require to be told that when "trying how the cap fitted" the performer lifted off with it the outer of the two thimbles, and that it is this thimble which afterwards appears beneath it.

THE PATRIOTIC THIMBLE.

The neat little trick to which Messrs. Hamley have given the above title has considerable affinity in effect with that last described.

The material of the thimble is in this case celluloid, coloured, in successive circles, red, white, and blue. The performer offers the thimble for examination.

THE VANISHING THIMBLES.

Yet another pretty variation of the thimble trick is the invention of a Belgian wizard, M. Van Lamèche. It may either be exhibited independently, or follow one of the other effects already described, the special thimbles employed being privately substituted for some of those already used.

Three thimbles are necessary. They should be of thin metal, graduated in point of size, so that No. 2 shall just go over No. 1, and No. 3 over No. 2. As they are intended to fit closely together, and when so fitted to appear as one, they are better without the usual bead around the edge.

At starting, No. 1 is placed on the first finger, No. 2 on the middle, and No. 3 on the third finger, and the hand is shown in this condition. Remarking, "I will now transfer one of these thimbles to the other hand," the performer makes the movement of doing so. When the right hand reaches the left, No. 3 is drawn off the third finger, and the second finger (which during the transit has been slightly flexed, in readiness for the movement) is inserted in it. The left hand is closed and withdrawn, professedly containing thimble No. 3, which, however, now actually covers No. 2, leaving the appearance of the right hand unaltered. After a momentary interval, filled up by some appropriate remark, the left hand is opened, and the thimble is found to have disappeared.

The same manoeuvre is then repeated, Nos. 2 and 3 being together passed on to No. 1. All three are then "vanished" simultaneously by means of the thumb-palm in the usual way.

M. Van Lamèche's scheme does not include the reproduction of the thimbles, but this might easily be arranged; by placing, say, a spare thimble in the left vest pocket, another inside the collar, and a third in the left ear; each thimble reproduced being put aside on the table as done with, and so remaining till the conclusion of the trick.

THE CHANGING DICE.

Readers of *Modern Magic* may recall a pretty little sleight-of-hand trick with a pair of dice,¹ the points of which are made to change in a mysterious manner. Two or three new ideas have been imported into the trick, involving not only an improvement in the method of working, but considerable novelty of effect.

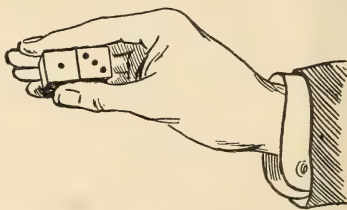


FIG. 209.

To make the following explanation clear, it will be necessary to recapitulate to some extent the instructions previously given. The performer, holding the dice as shown in Fig. 209, was directed first to exhibit the upper faces, and then (by raising the hand) the lower; then to "change" the latter, professedly by rubbing with the forefinger of the opposite hand, but actually

¹ Page 268.

by a slight upward movement of the thumb, compelling the dice to describe a half-turn on their own axis, this to be done under cover of lifting the arm for the second time.

The improvement in working to which I have alluded consists in changing the lower faces of the dice during the *first* upward movement of the arm, bringing them back to their normal position as the hand descends. When the lower faces of the dice are exhibited for the second time, they simply retain their position, and the performer may therefore even allow his wrist to be held, and his right hand to remain perfectly motionless, while he passes the forefinger over the faces of the dice to "change" them, no further movement being required.

Of course an expert in the use of dice would know, as remarked in *Modern Magic*, that the upper and lower faces of a properly made die invariably amount to "seven," and might call attention to the fact that those first shown as the points of the lower face are not quite as they ought to be. It is found, however, that so few people are experts in this particular, or, if they are so, trouble themselves to use their knowledge, that any fear of objection on this score may be safely disregarded.

Another variation, in this case in point of effect, is to suppress the points of the dice altogether, but to have them specially coloured, three of the sides (one of them being that at right angles with the other two), say, white, and the other three black. The working is practically the same as in the other case.

Thus, we will suppose the cubes, coloured as above, to be taken between the finger and thumb as in Fig. 209.

The exact placing, however, is a matter of importance. They must be so arranged (for this particular purpose) that the sides next the thumb are black, as also the two lower and the two end surfaces. Under these conditions, the performer lowers his hand and shows that the upper surfaces are white. He raises it to show the lower faces, but in so doing makes the upward half-turn with the thumb, under which circumstances the lower surfaces appear white also. Having allowed the spectator to fully satisfy himself on this point, he lowers the hand once more, bringing the dice back to their normal position, passes the forefinger over their lower faces, and again shows them *without* making the turn, when they are no longer white, but black.



FIG. 210.

Again, take the same dice between finger and thumb, but placed as shown in Fig. 210. The innermost of the two should now have one of its black sides, as shown, at top, one to the front and the other in contact with the second die. The white faces of the latter should be on the top, next the finger and next the other die.

The performer shows, as before, the upper faces, inviting the spectators to note that the white face is nearest the tips of the fingers. He then (making the turn) shows that in the case of the lower faces the white face is likewise outermost. When he again shows the lower surfaces, without the turn, they are found to have changed places, although the upper surfaces remain as before.

In another form of the trick, dice are used each of which has five sides white and one black. When

taken between the finger and thumb the black sides are undermost, but after having shown the upper surfaces, the performer, in the act of raising the hand to show the under sides, makes the dice describe the usual half-turn, so that the sides actually shown are white. In again lowering the hand he brings the dice back to their original position. Drawing the finger across the under surfaces, he raises the hand *without* making the turning movement. The dice are thus shown in their original position, the lower faces being now black. When he desires the black to disappear he lowers them once more, and on again raising them does so with the turning movement as at first.

To produce the maximum effect in this case, the performer should provide himself with two pairs of cubes, one pair being white all over. These are handed for examination, and when returned are taken back with the left hand, and apparently transferred to the right, in which the trick dice are already hidden. These are then placed in position and the trick worked as above. As the whole attention of the spectators is given to the right hand, there is nothing to prevent the plain dice remaining in the left hand (held by a slight contraction of the hand against the roots of the second and third fingers) and being again substituted for the others at the conclusion of the trick.

Other changes may easily be devised by any one who cares to study the subject, and among what may be called "pocket" tricks I know none that are more effective. Of course, save where the "change" last referred to is employed, there is no concealment of the fact that the dice are of two colours. I am indebted

to Messrs. Hamley for the knowledge of an ingenious expedient whereby an examined die may be made apparently to change completely from black to white, though it is in reality only of the first-named colour.

The die in this case is used not in pairs, but singly. It is a neat little affair of ebony, or other black wood, three quarters of an inch square, with sunken white spots.

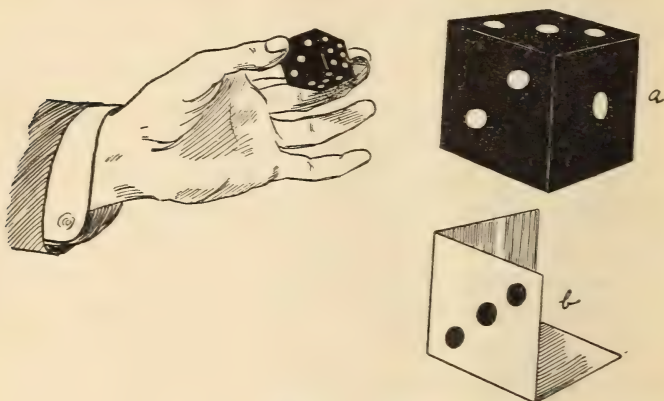


FIG. 211.

way, for examination, it is held between the forefinger and thumb of the left hand by two diagonally opposite corners, as shown in Fig. 211. three of its sides being thus simultaneously exposed. The performer has but to pass the finger of the opposite hand over it, in an upward direction, when it is seen to have changed not only points, but colour, being now white, with black spots. Another touch of the right hand, and it becomes black as before. It is immediately handed for examination, but nothing is found to explain the mystery.

The secret lies in the fact that the solid die, *a*, is used in conjunction with a tin shell, *b*, which exactly fits over it, covering three of its sides. This is enamelled white, with black spots. After the die has been examined, this is privately passed over it, and the die is arranged in the hand, as shown in the diagram, in such a way that only the three uncovered sides are visible.

When the die is for a moment covered by the opposite hand, it is made to perform a semi-revolution, bringing the three white faces to the front.

When the trick is over, the die is taken in the right hand, and allowed to drop out of the shell, the latter being then palmed, and the die offered for examination.

CHAMELEON WATER.

The apparatus for this trick consists of a clear glass jug of about a pint capacity,¹ filled with distilled water (this is procurable of any druggist), and seven wineglasses alike in shape. The performer pours water from the jug into the various glasses, and back again, when it changes (apparently) from water to ink, ink to water, water to wine, and wine to water, in a most bewildering manner. This trick has been deservedly called "The King of Chemical Tricks."

The requirements are as follows:

In the first place, the water must have dissolved in it a small quantity (say as much as will lie on a dime or sixpence) of tannin. This does not affect its

¹ A decanter is sometimes used, but the jug is somehow less suggestive of chemical preparation, and the liquids are more easily returned to it from the glasses.

colour or clearness. The glasses must be arranged in a determinate order (preferably *not* a single row) on a tray, so that the performer can be sure of using them in proper succession. Of these, Nos. 1 and 3 are unprepared. The remainder are prepared as under:

Nos. 2 and 4 each contain two drops of perchloride of iron ("steel drops").

No. 5 contains ten drops of a saturated solution of oxalic acid.

No. 6 contains ten drops of liquid ammonia.

No. 7 contains sixty drops (a small teaspoonful) of sulphuric acid.

With these before him, the performer is ready to show the trick. Holding up the glass jug, he remarks that no doubt all present will take this to be ordinary water, but such is not quite the case. It is water in which a chameleon has committed suicide, and which has thereby acquired the chameleon property of changing its colour.

Filling the first glass, he holds it up to the light and asks if any of the audience would like to taste it, assuring them that the flavour of dead chameleon is really not very objectionable. No one is likely to accept the offer, though if some rash schoolboy did so (and "Stalky & Co." do sometimes rush in where wiser persons fear to tread), he would be none the worse for a sip at this stage, and the flavour of the tannin in so small a quantity is only just perceptible. If he did notice anything peculiar, it would naturally be put down to the chameleon.

Before filling the second glass the performer waves his wand over it, and, when filled, the contents, instead of water, appear to be ink. "It's all done by

the power of the magic wand, ladies and gentlemen. This time I will abstain from using the wand" (he fills glass No. 3), "and the water remains clear as at first. Again I wave the wand" (he fills No. 4), "and the water is as black as if a nigger had washed in it. Perhaps it may look better if we put it back in the jug." He returns the contents of all four glasses to the jug, all of the water in which then appears to be ink. "That does not seem to be much improvement," he remarks, refilling the four glasses as before. "What am I thinking of?" he exclaims, as he reaches the last. "I quite forgot to use the wand." He waves the wand over the fifth glass, and fills it from the jug. The black fluid has again undergone a change. The contents of the glass appear to be clear water.

He now waves the wand over the jug and pours the contents of all five glasses into it, *beginning with No. 5*. The moment this is poured into the jug, the contents of the latter become clear again, and the same thing happens with the contents of each of the other glasses, as they are poured into the jug.

The performer, remarking, "That is better. Black is an ugly colour. I am glad we have got back to clear water," refills glasses 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, but at this point, as if bethinking himself, says, "But perhaps you would like to see another change. Observe, this time I wave the wand in the opposite direction." He waves the wand over glass 6, and fills it. The supposed clear water immediately turns to a claret colour.

Again waving his wand over the jug, he pours all back, *beginning with No. 6*, and the whole contents become claret colour. Once more he fills the glasses (1 to 6); the contents of all are still claret colour.

Another wave of the wand, and as he fills glass No. 7 the colour disappears.

He pours back all into the jug, beginning with No. 7, and all is in appearance clear water, as at first.

The reader should be cautioned that some of the above chemicals are distinctly unwholesome. The amalgamated liquids should therefore be placed out of harm's way as soon as possible.

A further caution. The chemicals employed should be of the best quality, as any impurity, either in these or in the water used, would be prejudicial to the complete success of the experiment; hence the recommendation to use distilled water.

The quantities above given should be carefully checked by experiment, as, according to the strength and purity of the drugs, a trifle more or less may in some instances be necessary to produce a perfect result.

A very similar and equally pretty trick, though the effect is produced by wholly different means, is that of

RAINBOW WATER.

A tray with a decanter full of water and half a dozen wineglasses is placed upon the table. The performer gives some fanciful account of the origin of the water, which he alleges to have the curious property of assuming different colours at command. This he proceeds to illustrate, as follows:

Taking up one of the glasses, he fills it from the decanter. The water remains unchanged. He takes up

the second glass and touches its lip with the wand. "This time," he says, "the water shall become crimson," and the water poured out is crimson accordingly. He fills a third glass, touching it with the wand as before, and the water is deep blue. Filling a fourth in the same way, the colour is violet.

By this time the spectators naturally begin to suspect that the water is not *quite* plain water, and that the glasses are somehow chemically prepared. To prove that such is not the case, the performer takes the glass first filled, invites some one to taste the water in it, and pours the remainder back into the decanter. He then hands the glass just emptied and the two remaining glasses to the company, who satisfy themselves that there is no preparation about them. They are then invited to choose any one of the glasses, which he forthwith fills from the decanter. "Observe," he says, "the water remains—as it was at first—pure water. It is the influence of the wand which makes the difference." He pours the water back again. "What colour shall we have now—orange, scarlet, or green?" He touches the same glass with the wand, and again fills it, when the water is seen to be of the colour chosen. The other two colours are produced in like manner.

The secret lies in an ingenious preparation, partly of the glasses, partly of the decanter. To begin with, the performer procures aniline dye in powder, of six different colours, say, crimson, blue, violet, orange, scarlet, and emerald green. (These are sold in penny tubes, one such tube of each being sufficient for a dozen performances.) Mixing glycerine and water in equal proportions, he moistens each powder separately with

the mixture, and rubs it down to the consistency of cream.¹

The glasses we will distinguish by the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, answering to their positions on the tray. Nos. 2, 3, and 4 are prepared by inserting at the bottom a little dab of each of the first three colours. Nos. 1, 5, and 6 are left unprepared. The lip of the decanter is prepared with the three remaining colours, a dab at each of the points marked *a*, *b*, and *c*, in Fig. 212. The fourth point, *d*, is left vacant.

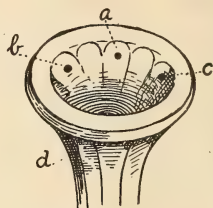


FIG. 212.

The working of the trick will now be readily understood. In filling glasses 1, 2, 3, and 4 the performer holds the decanter in such a manner that the water shall pass out over *d*. The result is that the liquid in glass No. 1 remains clear water, while that poured into 2, 3, and 4 takes in each case the colour of the dye in the glass. When in the later stage of the trick the performer desires to produce clear water, he again pours it out over the point *d*, and for the remaining colours over *a*, *b*, or *c*, as the case may be.

The actual performance of the trick is easy enough, but some care must be taken with the previous pre-

¹ For lack of glycerine, white sugar, dissolved in water so as to form a syrup, may be used.

paration in order to be certain of producing a perfect result. The pigments must neither be too wet nor too dry, and the exact degree of moisture, as also the exact quantity to give the desired shade of colour, can only be ascertained by actual experiment.

The performer should provide himself with a small funnel, preferably of glass, for pouring back the water into the decanter. Without this there would be some risk of washing the pigment off the lip into the decanter, and so spoiling the trick.

The addition of a little rectified spirit (in the proportion of about 1 in 8) to the water, is recommended as making the colours dissolve more rapidly. If no rectified spirit be at hand, whiskey makes a very fair substitute.

THE MAGIC ORGAN PIPES.

This capital trick, known on the Continent by the more romantic title of "*Le Souper du Diable*," is said to be the invention of a wizard (amateur, I believe) named Antonio Molini. Whether he is as Italian as his name would seem to imply, I cannot say, it being a sort of unwritten law that if a conjurer adopts a stage name, he shall assume some nationality other than his own. In any case, the inventor may claim to have originated what is a rarity in conjuring, namely, a trick which is a genuine novelty, not only in effect, but in principle.

The essential apparatus consists of six metal tubes, zinc, tin, or sheet brass, alike in length, but graduated in point of diameter so that the smallest passes easily through the next larger, and so on throughout. The metal may be either simply polished, or enamelled to

taste. For stage purposes, the tubes should be twelve to sixteen inches in height, and range downwards from about six inches in diameter.

Each tube should bear, conspicuously painted on it, a number, the largest being No. 1, the next No. 2, and so on.¹ In the orthodox form of the trick these are

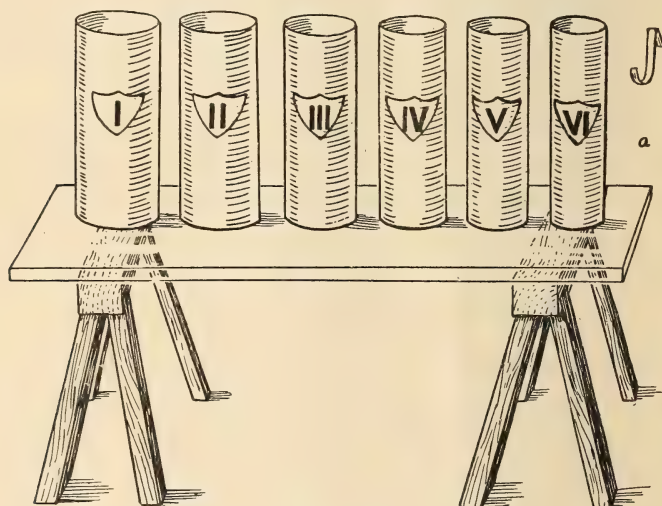


FIG. 213.

arranged, as shown in Fig. 213, on a slab of plate glass, supported on low trestles. If, however, the performer finds this arrangement too costly, he may

¹ In the trick as originally produced, the smallest cylinder was made No. 1, and the tubes were successively exhibited from the smaller up to the larger, but the method described in the text is the easier to work.

The set of cylinders is sometimes used without numbers, but each japanned a different colour. This is in some respects an improvement, but in describing the trick, the use of the numbers makes the explanation clearer.

substitute for the glass slab a plain wooden plank, and for the trestles a couple of chairs. In either case, a plain wooden table, with seats for two persons, should stand close by.

Briefly stated, the effect of the trick is as follows: The performer, having shown clearly that tube No. 1 is empty, proceeds to pass No. 2 through it, and then shows this also empty. No. 3 is then passed through No. 2, and No. 3 shown empty, and so on throughout. This done, the performer asks a couple of the spectators to step up on the stage, and join him at supper. They take their seats at the table, and he produces from the empty tubes, first, a table-cloth, glasses, and plates,—then a bottle of wine, a loaf (of the long “Vienna” shape), a sausage, eggs, a roast duck, and other eatables, in fact,—all the materials for a complete meal, even to a vase of flowers wherewith to decorate the table. The tubes are then “nested,” one within the other. The performer passes his arm through the innermost, makes his bow, and so carries them off the stage.

The secret lies mainly in a very ingenious method of loading the tubes, and of transferring the contents from one to another. The largest, No. 1, is at the outset empty. The rest are all fully loaded, the contents being suspended from the upper edge of each tube by means of a hook, formed of a narrow strip of tin, bent into the shape shown at *a* in Fig. 213. It will be observed that the hook is bent at top at an acute angle, while the lower bend is rounded. The load is in each case suspended from the lower arm of this hook by means of a loop of black thread, in such manner that it shall hang midway, or a little lower, in

the tube. There should at the top be a clear space of two inches. At the bottom, an inch, or less, may suffice.

One of the most important loads is the bottle of wine, which is a specially prepared article. It is a black bottle, of the shape used for Burgundy. The bottom is cut out, and a false bottom of tin cemented in below the neck, just so far down as to leave room for a couple of glassfuls of wine above it. Near the lower edge of the bottle is drilled a small hole, through which is passed the thread to form the loop, and by means of such loop the bottle is suspended, upside down, in tube No. 2. In the vacant space within the bottle are packed, also upside down, two small tumblers, one within the other, and, within these, other small articles, say, a mustard-pot and salt-cellar.

In tube No. 3 is suspended a table-cloth, rolled round a couple of table napkins and a like number of knives and forks, and held together by a couple of rubber bands, one at each end. In No. 4 may be a sausage, a Vienna loaf, and a net containing a couple of hard-boiled eggs. In No. 5, a roast duck or chicken, which *may* be the genuine article, though it is more frequently a *papier-mâché* imitation. In No. 6 is suspended, upside down, a vase of flowers, which may be so arranged as to expand freely when another rubber band, encircling them, is removed.

On his own person the performer conceals, under the vest on each side, a couple of small plates. These should be of enamelled metal, as occupying less space.

To exhibit the trick at its best it should be led up to by some more or less plausible story, accounting for

the performer's use of such comparatively out-of-the-way objects as (alleged) organ pipes. Much of the effect of the illusion will depend upon the skill with which this is done. I quote, a page or two farther on, a "traveller's tale," arranged to serve as introduction to the trick. When he reaches the appropriate stage of his discourse (which should be a little *before* he begins to call direct attention to the alleged emptiness of the tubes), the performer should take tube No. 1 in his hand, and without apparent intention so move it about as to let every one see that it is a plain, empty cylinder. Replacing this, and lifting up No. 2, he lowers it vertically into No. 1, and, when it is fairly down, lifts the latter off again at the top. The effect of this is that No. 1 lifts the hook off No. 2 on to its own upper edge, carrying away within itself the parcel which was suspended in No. 2, and so enabling the latter to be in turn shown empty.

The same course of procedure is adopted with the remaining tubes, No. 3 being lowered into No. 2, No. 2 lifted off, No. 3 shown empty, and so on throughout; the final condition of the tubes being that No. 6 is left empty, and all the rest loaded, each with the original load of the next lower number. Some amount of practice will be needed to work this portion of the trick with ease and rapidity. The more quickly (without manifest hurry) the operation is performed, the less time have the audience to reflect that, if the tubes were really empty, the obvious course would be to show them so at once, without the preliminary passing of one through another.

Having completed this introductory process, the performer proceeds to lay his table, naturally beginning

with the production of the table-cloth. Having drawn this out of the appropriate tube (privately removing the rubber bands), he notices, with apparent surprise, that there is something wrapped up in the bundle, whence he in due course produces the table napkins, knives, and forks. He lays these down temporarily on the slab which supports the tubes, remarking, "There is something else here, I fancy." So saying, he shakes out the table-cloth, and produces from under it, after the manner of the "fish-bowl" trick, first the one, and then the other pair of plates.¹ The other requirements for the meal are in due course produced from the remaining tubes, and the professor proceeds to wait upon his two guests, whose probable embarrassment at being invited to eat under circumstances of such publicity is likely to cause some fun to the rest of the spectators.

The hooks and rubber rings are quietly pocketed, and the performer brings the trick to a conclusion by packing the six tubes one within the other, as already mentioned,—the best possible proof that there is "no deception" about them.

It will readily be understood that the performer is not limited to the production of the materials for a

¹ Sometimes a different plan is adopted. The performer comes forward, in the first instance, with a large table napkin thrown over one arm. Before commencing his patter he throws this on one side. When he has reached the stage at which plates are wanted, he picks it up again, and produces them from under it.

It seems to me that the producing the plates from the table-cloth is the more artistic method, as the plates in such case appear to come, though indirectly, from the tube. The fact that they are larger in diameter than the tubes makes the production all the more magical.

supper. By modifying the patter accordingly, the tubes may be made equally available for the production of other objects, particularly such as are of a compressible kind. Indeed, some of the makers of magical apparatus have developed the trick in a new direction, by manufacturing articles specially for use with the tubes; as, for example, a bird-cage with a rising bottom, leaving just space above it for a living bird, with a vacancy below for the accommodation of multiplying balls, expanding bouquets, and the like. Lanterns, with coloured glass sides, to be produced lighted, are made after a similar fashion. These may, at the outset, be themselves loaded with alligators, snakes, fish, or carrots, all of which are now made on the collapsible principle.

A recent number of the French magical serial, *L'Illusioniste*, contains the description of a new method of working the trick. In one sense it is distinctly inferior, inasmuch as only two of the six tubes are loaded, and the quantity of the production is proportionately limited. On the other hand, all the tubes are alike in size, and the passing of one tube through another (the necessity for which is the weak point of the original trick) is avoided. The method by which this is achieved is so novel, and at the same time so ingenious, that I cannot refrain from quoting it.

The six tubes are numbered in Roman characters, cut out of glazed paper, and pasted on. The two loaded tubes bear in front of them the letters I., II., but only lightly stuck on (this may be done with soap or wax). No I. also bears on its opposite side the letters III., and No. II. on its opposite side the letters

VI., these last being stuck on securely. The third tube bears the letters III., but the first I. is removable, and in like manner the V. of No. VI. Nos. IV. and V. are permanently marked with the appropriate letters, and have no specialty.

The arrangement of the tubes at the outset is as shown in Fig. 214. For the sake of distinction, the permanent letters are shown *black*, the others being those which are removable.

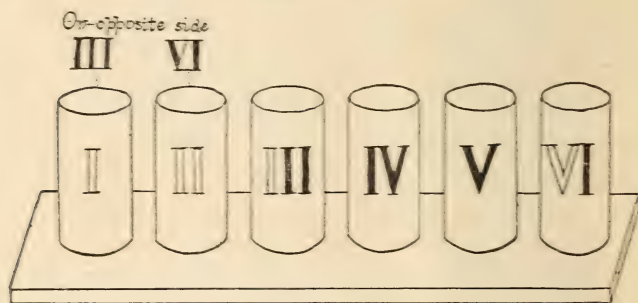


FIG. 214.

The tubes on the extreme left (the original Nos. I., II.) are alone loaded, each containing, supported on separate hooks, three independent packages. The thread loops by which they are suspended may be of different lengths, as may be needed for the better accommodation of the packets. The writer of the article (M. Adolphe Blind, of Geneva) assures us that in two tubes eleven inches in height and five in diameter room can be found for a small table-cloth, two knives, two forks, two spoons, a Vienna loaf, two bottles (shells only, of enamelled zinc) fitting one within the other, two gelatine tumblers, a sausage, a couple of eggs, and a small lobster.

The performer begins by bringing forward for examination tubes V. and VI. In returning, he peels off the V. from the VI. (transforming it into No. I.), and places it immediately behind No. II., No. V. being placed in front of the latter. The arrangement of the tubes is now as shown in Fig. 215.

He next offers tubes III. and IV. for examination, and on the return journey peels off the loose I. from No. III., transforming it into No. II. He places this behind, and No. IV. in front of, No. I., and under

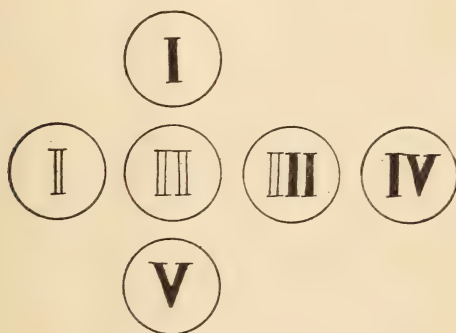


FIG. 215.

pretence of squaring them up, gives a half-turn to the original Nos. I. and II., transforming them, so far as the spectators are concerned, into Nos. III. and VI. The six tubes are now arranged as in Fig. 216. Then, remarking, "Let me see; I have now shown you all but Nos. I. and II.," or something to the same effect, he brings forward for inspection the two in the rear row which now represent those numbers. If this process is carried through with sufficient *aplomb* the spectators will be fully persuaded that they have examined all the tubes.

The cylinders are now arranged in a row in accordance with their new numbering, the original No. VI. being now No. I., and the original III., No. II. The original No. I. has become No. III., and the original No. II., No. VI. (These last, it will be remembered, are the two loaded tubes.) Nos. IV. and V. retain their original numbers and their former position.

The performer, standing behind the table, begins the production by extracting the rolled-up table-cloth

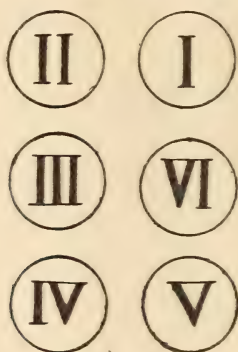


FIG. 216.

from tube III. He spreads this out, and displays, emblazoned on it, in bold letters, *THE DEVIL'S SUPPER*. He holds it by two of its corners, outspread in front of the tubes, and under cover of this, while engaging the general attention with a little patter as to why the devil should require any supper, or should take this peculiar method of providing it, he transfers four packets (two from each of the loaded tubes) to the vacant tubes, one to each.¹

¹ The inventor does not explain how this is to be done; but by holding the corners of the cloth between the second and third fingers of each hand, the thumb and forefinger would be left free

This done, the cloth is laid on a table, and the production proceeds in regular course.

The expedient already described for the production of the plates may, of course, equally be made available in this form of the trick.

For the following patter (already referred to), which seems to me rather ingeniously conceived, I am indebted to the German magical serial, *Die Zauberwelt*. Its only fault is that, to English ideas, it is a trifle lengthy.

"Ladies and gentlemen, with your permission I propose to exhibit a little experiment, which will serve on the one hand to show you what great advances have of late years been made in the art of magic, and, on the other, to prove what good service may now and then be rendered to humanity by the most unlikely objects.

"For instance, these receptacles before you. At first sight I dare say you may have taken them for pickle-jars, or something of that kind, but as a matter of fact they serve a very much higher use. I will relate to you in a few words their history, and I will at the same time tell you a little secret connected with them.

"On my return voyage from India, which I had been visiting in order to study the wonders of the Indian fakirs, our crew sighted a ship aground near the Cape of Good Hope. Our captain hove to, to see if he could render any assistance. The passengers and crew had already left the wrecked ship and clambered

to operate behind it, or, with a little modification of the hooks, the thumbs alone might suffice to lift the packages from one tube to another.

on to some rocks, where we found them, half dead of hunger.

"We gave the poor wretches food, but I observed that one man took neither food nor drink. On questioning him, I found that he was broken-hearted on account of the loss that had befallen him. He told me that he was an organ-builder, under contract to deliver and personally erect a church organ in a transatlantic city, and that now he had lost his all.

"In the course of his story, he pointed to a heap of something covered with matting. On going closer I found it to consist of a number of metal organ pipes of various sizes. These pipes were all the old man had left, and now his only thought was to get them back to his home. It appeared to me that there need not be much difficulty as to this. When the victims of the shipwreck had been fed, and were making ready to go on board our ship, I asked each of them to carry on board one or two of the pipes, so as to save at any rate some part of his instrument for the unfortunate organ-builder. I myself took a double armful, and carried them to the boat, and the others followed my example.

"Our vessel started anew on its voyage, and at night, when the persons we had saved were asleep in their berths, I went on deck to see that the organ pipes were placed under cover. While I was thus employed, it struck me that, in order to impress all on board with the value of these pipes, I would make use of a few of them to exhibit a little trick which I had learned from an Indian fakir. Some of the passengers had openly expressed a fear that, our numbers being so largely increased by the presence of the shipwrecked

persons, the provisions in store would scarcely suffice for the voyage, and that we should all have to go short of our proper allowance. To set this apprehension at rest, I determined to show the passengers, when fair weather should again allow them to assemble on deck, how something can be made out of nothing, and thereby dissipate any fears they might entertain of going short of food.

“The next morning, in company with the organ-builder, I took in hand the stowage of the pipes. Some of them had been so knocked about in course of salvage that they were valueless to the owner. I asked him, however, not to throw them overboard, but to give them to me as a keepsake, which he readily agreed to do. With the help of a metal-saw which happened to be on board, I cut down the best parts of these very bruised pipes, which were of various sizes, to pretty nearly the same length, and prepared them for my experiment.

“Shortly afterwards, one fine afternoon, I invited all hands to assemble on deck. When they were seated before me, as you are at this moment, and after I had expatiated, in eloquent terms, on the great value of organ pipes and the unlimited power of magic, I proceeded to prove my assertions. I placed the organ pipes in a row, exactly as they stand before you to-day, and with your permission I will repeat the phenomenon, just as I exhibited it to the passengers on board that ship.

“Your silent attention shows the interest you take in the experiment. Just such a silence prevailed that day on board, and even now I can see in my mind’s eye that old organ-builder; how he gazed, open-mouthed and

lost in wonder, at the marvels which took place before his eyes.

"In the first place, ladies and gentlemen, allow me to show you these pipes, one by one, in order to satisfy you that nothing can be concealed in them, and further that there is not the slightest preparation about them. I have purposely placed them upon a sheet of glass, so that you may be assured that nothing is introduced into them from below. That I put nothing into them from above you will be able to see for yourselves."

[During the foregoing harangue the performer has passed each tube through the next larger and shown the latter empty.]

"And nevertheless, I am able to produce from these tubes, which you have one and all seen to be empty, an unlimited number of any conceivable articles, of which in point of fact there are thousands in these tubes, though you are not able to see them.

"The quantity of provisions in these tubes is such that it would feed a whole army for years to come. But we needn't trouble about the future; just now we are only concerned with the present. May I ask one or two of you to step this way, and sample the contents of my magic tubes."

THE JAR OF WATER AND HAT.

Tricks, up to the stage standard, which can be safely exhibited in the very midst of a circle of inquisitive spectators, are very rare. Of this class the following is a capital example. The credit of this very artistic combination belongs to Mr. David Devant, though, like most of his best things, it has been imitated without acknowledgment in a good many quarters. I am

pleased to be in a position to give the absolutely correct version.

The requirements for the trick are:

1. A tall hat. This may either be borrowed, or be the performer's own property (the patter being arranged accordingly.)

2. A good-sized silk handkerchief.

3. An ordinary plate.

4. A glass jar, of pint size, but special pattern, being absolutely cylindrical and perfectly plain, as *a* in Fig. 217.

5. A glass cylinder, open at each end, and fitting easily over the jar, as *b* in the same figure.

N. B.—The height of the jar should be five inches, and its outside diameter, for a performer with hands of average size, three and one eighth inches. The cylinder should be of the same height, and its outside diameter three and three eighths inches.

6. A jug or decanter of water.

7. Two flat bags, of stiffish whitey-brown paper, such as grocers pack tea or sugar in. These should be about seven inches in height, and in width large enough to go easily over the glass cylinder. One of these bags is at starting laid flat under the plate, and the other on the top of the glass.

At the outset of the trick the glass, within the cylinder, is placed upon the plate. The performer must by practice acquire facility in picking up both together; either by nipping them simultaneously by their upper edges, or by tilting them slightly, grasping the cylinder round the lower edge and supporting the glass within it by inserting the little finger beneath them.

Mr. Devant's introductory patter runs to something

like the following effect. It is assumed that the performer is using his own hat.

"In my next experiment I use that most respectable article, a top hat. Would you mind seeing that it is empty, sir. Nothing in it, is there? No, there never has been much—I always wear it myself.

"The apparatus I am going to use is very simple. For instance, this handkerchief; funny shape, is n't it?—got the border all round the edge. I am going to have one made with the border in the middle, but I have n't got it yet. I also use an ordinary grocer's bag,

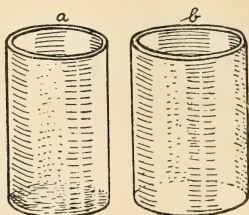


FIG. 217.

the regular sand-bag—sugar-bag, I mean; and a glass jar and a plate. You can see through this jar. It isn't one of those nasty family jars that you can't see through—in fact nobody wants to see at all.

"Now I fill this jar with water" (he fills it to within half an inch of the brim), "ordinary wet water; you know tricks with water are very difficult. I only knew one man who did a really good trick with water, and he had a lot of practice. He did it every day. He was a milkman.

"First I cover the jar with this paper bag; then I take it and put it in this empty hat." [He lifts it by nipping the upper edge of glass and cylinder together

through the paper.] "You know there are only two kinds of men that will lend a hat to a conjurer; one is the man who never lent a hat to a conjurer before, and the other is the man who is going to buy a new one anyhow, so he doesn't mind what happens to it. Now I am going to make that water rise up and overflow the hat. Perhaps I may produce a few ducks and geese as well. Of course, that sort of thing does spoil the hat a bit. But I had forgotten; this is my own hat. That's different; I think I will do the trick another way. I will get some one to hold the glass instead. Perhaps a lady will oblige me by holding it for a second or two. Madam, will you hold the plate with both hands. It's rather heavy. Good gracious, it's gone!"

When the performer announces his pretended determination to do the trick "another way," he lifts out the paper bag, containing ostensibly the glass jar as before, and replaces it on the plate. As a matter of fact, however, he now nips the paper bag alone, and it is this only which is placed upon the plate, though it retains enough of the circular form to suggest that the jar is still in it, and, strange to say, the audience distinctly hear a "click" as the bag comes in contact with the plate. The secret of this very artistic touch is as follows: During the previous patter the performer has got from his vest-pocket and finger-palmed between the first and second fingers, a penny. When the plate is taken in the left hand, the projecting edge of the coin is pressed hard against its underside. At the moment when the bag is placed on the plate, the intervening forefinger is smartly withdrawn, and the penny strikes the bottom of the plate, with the result above mentioned.

At the moment when the lady is about to take the

plate, the performer gives a sudden jerk, and sends the empty bag flying over her head among the spectators. He continues:

"I am really very sorry, madam. I did n't mean it to do that. But I know what has happened. The glass has gone back to the hat. It does that to annoy me and give me exercise. Yes, here it is."

He lifts out the glass and cylinder together by their upper edges, and replaces them on the plate. Then, taking the second bag from underneath the plate, he opens it out, and continues:

"In case every one did n't quite follow that movement, I'll do it again. In fact I'll repeat it. When I do a thing twice I always repeat it. I find it's the best way. You will remember that I filled the jar with water, and then covered it with this paper bag, just as I do now" (he suits the action to the words); "then I took it and put it in this empty hat, just as I am doing now; then suddenly remembering that it was my own hat I took it out again and put it upon the plate, just as I do now." [Here he takes out the paper bag as before, but with the cylinder inside it, and as he puts it down raps with it lightly on the edge of the plate, which is held balanced on the finger-tips, to prove that the glass is actually there.] "Now a glass of water is a most difficult thing to drink—to manipulate, I mean."

Lifting the bag and cylinder together he, with the left hand, lays the plate over the mouth of the hat. This hand is then placed under the glass, which is still held in the right. He then, in a casual way, raises the paper bag an inch or so, letting the spectators see that the cylinder,—or, as they imagine, the glass jar—is still there, resting on his hand. With the right hand he

picks up the handkerchief, which he had, after exhibiting it, laid over the bend of the left arm.

"In case every one does not see it plainly, I will cover it with this handkerchief; you will see it better that way. It makes it look larger, and gives it colour. Now I want a boy to help me. Just an ordinary boy. I don't want a boy over fifty. I want a boy to hold this glass as a lady did a moment ago." [We will suppose that a volunteer presents himself.] "Thank you! Now, before we go any further, will you put your hand underneath the handkerchief, and tell the audience whether the glass of water is still really there." [The boy is allowed to put up his hand, and to feel the side of the cylinder.]* "It is there? Good. Now may I ask if you have a steady hand? You don't know? But you ought to know, you know; you look very young, young enough to know everything. Do you mind going to the front? I know you won't if you're a British boy. Well, come to the back of the front. Now, take hold of the top of the handkerchief with one finger and thumb—you will find a finger and thumb on one of your hands;—now put your other hand underneath and take hold of the glass again. Now hold tight! Look! Go!" [The handkerchief is shaken out, and the paper bag falls, empty.] "Where is it? It can't be sewn up in the corners of the handkerchief, can it? Now can you guess where it has gone? You don't think I have concealed it about me, do you? because you can examine my clothing, if you wish. All my pockets are quite empty—as usual. No, it is n't here, nor here. I believe he thinks I'm guilty—of drinking it, or something equally dreadful. No, sir! It has gone back to the hat, as before. Come and see—is it there? Yes, of course.

Well, that 's exactly how it 's done, see? I 'd better take it out; I might get water on the brain, might n't I?"

During all this patter, as may be supposed, the performer has not been idle. As soon as the left hand is covered by the handkerchief, he unfastens the cuff on that side; and during the "talkee-talkee" as to a steady hand, he gradually lowers the glass cylinder down over the hand, and on to the bare arm. When he tells the boy to stand "at the back of the front," he motions him back with this same arm, leaving the paper bag, covered by the handkerchief, in the right. The remainder of the trick explains itself.

Mr. Devant now and then introduces an ingenious little piece of business, which may be worked in either at the first, or second stage of the trick, and considerably enhances its effect; namely, the spilling of a little water from the supposed glass after it has been removed from the hat. To produce this effect, the performer in taking the paper bag (or the bag and cylinder together as the case may be) out of the hat, presses the thumb down so as to break the paper slightly, and at the same time to depress a small portion of it below the level of the water. If he has managed matters satisfactorily, there will be a little pool of water resting in a hollow on the bottom of the inverted bag, and this is judiciously spilt at an opportune moment, convincing the most sceptical that the jar of water is, up to that time, still inside the bag.

THE BAG OF MYSTERY.

This very effective trick is another of the specialities of Mr. David Devant. It is one in which a clumsy per-

former would "give himself away" half a dozen times over, but worked in the finished style of Mr. Devant, and with the quaint, crisp patter with which he presents it (and the essential part of which I propose here to reproduce) it never fails to score handsomely.

The requirements for its exhibition are as under:

1. The "bag," from which the trick derives its name.

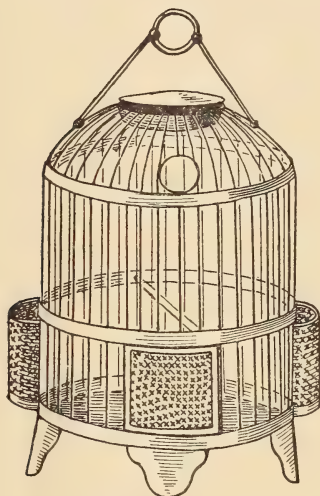


FIG. 218.

In point of appearance nothing could be less "mysterious"; for it is merely a plain ordinary bag of whitey-brown paper fifteen inches square; the sort of thing a milliner would use to send home a lady's sailor hat in.

2. An expanding bird-cage, of a kind not unfamiliar to conjurers; one of similar construction being frequently used in connection with hat tricks. The cage, when expanded to its full extent, is as depicted in Fig. 218, standing nearly twelve inches high. In plan it is

oval, measuring six and one half by five and one half inches, exclusive of the seed- and water-containers. These revolve on their own axes. By giving them a half-turn, and thereby bringing them inside the cage, the performer is enabled to lower the upper half, telescope-fashion, into the lower. The four feet, which are mere flat pieces of tin, fold down on spring hinges against the bottom, but fly up again to an erect position the moment they are permitted to do so. The ring at the top, which is merely attached to the cage by a wire on each side, normally lies flat on the top, and in this condition the net height of the cage is seven inches only. If lifted by the ring, however, the upper portion is drawn out of the lower, the seed- and water-containers each make a half-turn, under compulsion of a spiral spring, to the outside (thereby preventing the upper portion from sinking down again); the feet rise up to a perpendicular position, and the cage assumes its full dimensions. In the top, immediately under the lifting ring, is a little oval receptacle; a sort of patty-pan, three inches long and three quarters of an inch deep, with a hinged lid, for a purpose which will presently appear. Just below this is a circular opening in the wirework, a trifle over an inch in diameter. This is designed to accommodate the finger in the act of loading the cage, at the proper moment, into the bag.

3. Two glass tumblers; a fork (silver or otherwise), and a plate.

4. A raw egg.

5. A wedding-ring and keeper. These are placed at the outset on a folded piece of tissue paper (to prevent rattling) inside the little receptacle at the top of the cage.

6. A "nest" of three envelopes, all closed. In the innermost of these is a duplicate wedding-ring and keeper. The outermost is sealed with red sealing-wax, not in the ordinary way, but along each of its front

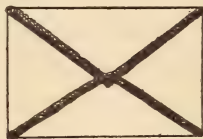


FIG. 219.

edges, as in Fig. 219, so as to leave absolutely no opening.¹

Across the back (see Fig. 220) is a paper band *a a*, pasted down at each end. Under this is passed a piece of blue silk garter elastic, *b b*, sewn at the point *c*, so as to form an circular band or loop. One end, however, is

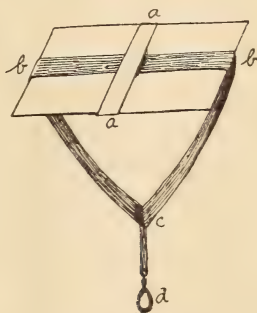


FIG. 220.

continued for four or five inches beyond this point, terminating in a swivel-hook, *d*. This at a short distance looks like ordinary ribbon.

¹ The easiest and neatest way of doing this is to melt the sealing-wax in methylated spirits, to the consistency of thick cream, and apply it with a brush. It will harden in the course of a few hours.

7. An envelope corresponding with the smallest of those forming the "nest," and having its flap gummed down with the exception of a space of about an inch and a half, into which is inserted one end of a flat tin tube, large enough to allow the free passage of a lady's ring. The envelope, thus prepared, and folded in half, is placed just within the breast of the performer's vest, on the left side.

The arrangement of the stage is, in effect, as shown in Fig. 221, the centre table being flanked on the one side by a chair, (with cloth or solid back) and on the

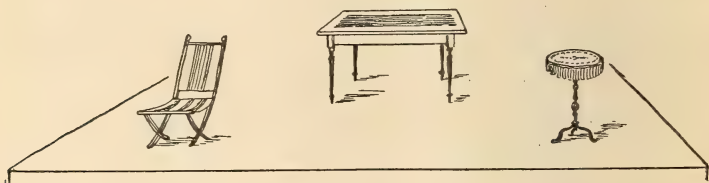


FIG. 221.

other by a small round table. At the back of the chair, in the top rail, is fixed a hook.

The cage is prepared for use by placing a canary bird in it, turning in the seed and water-containers, and letting the upper portion slide down into the lower. The cage is then turned upside down, its four feet are folded flat, and kept in that position by laying the nest of envelopes upon them. The elastic band (*bb* in Fig. 220) is drawn over the top of the cage, holding all securely together, and the swivel, *d*, is hooked into one of the upper wires of the cage. The cage is then turned right side up again, and suspended, by the ring at top, from the hook behind the chair. The plate,

with the two glasses and fork, is placed on the centre table or anywhere handy.

The performer, having the egg palmed in his right hand, and holding the bag in the same hand, begins as follows:

"Ladies and gentlemen, for my next experiment I should like a gentleman to assist me by coming upon the stage to act as a sort of committee of one. I must ask for a responsible sort of man; an experienced man, say a married man. I don't want to make a fool of any one; one is enough on this small stage. I simply want some one to examine one or two articles that I shall use.

"Do you mind standing here, sir, or will you sit down?" [The person volunteering, whom I shall hereafter refer to as "the assistant," is seated on the chair behind which is the cage.] "The first thing I want you to look at is this empty paper bag. Examine it well. Do you find it totally unprepared? Thanks. Now will you hold your right hand in front of you, so. I am going to cover it for a moment or two with this empty paper bag, and I will try to produce something in your empty hand. All I will ask you is to hold your hand under cover of the bag, and wish for anything you want. Something reasonable, you know; of course you must n't wish for a baby or a steam yacht. Anyhow, whatever you find in your hand, don't drop it on the floor. I am only going to cover this gentleman's hand so that his left hand shall not know what his right hand is up to. Now, sir, close your fingers gently over." [The bag is withdrawn.] "Look! Now open your hand. Well, that is a curious thing to wish for. An egg! Do you believe this is a real one? Small? Yes, it is rather small; you should have wished for a bigger one. Per-

haps the hen that laid it was only learning. However, we will break it, and see whether it is real or not. Will you hold this a moment" (handing him the plate, with glass and fork, and then breaking the egg into the glass). "Oh, yes" (smelling it), "it *is* real. Extremely real. Would you mind holding this" (handing glass and fork, and taking away plate and shells); I'd rather *you* held it."

It will now be well to explain the working of the trick up to this point. When the bag has been examined, the performer, in taking it back, grasps it by one corner of the opening with the left hand. He opens out the bag with the right hand, and under cover of so doing deposits the palmed egg in one of its bottom corners. He then grasps the bag, with the left hand, by that same corner, thereby securing the egg. He takes up his position on the left side of his volunteer assistant, and in covering the hand of the latter with the bag, he brings the corner containing the egg just over it. The assistant, realizing that something is offered him, naturally takes it into his hand, which he is then asked to close. The performer then removes the bag and asks him to open his hand.¹ While all eyes are thus drawn to the egg, the performer with his right hand unhooks the cage from behind the chair, and loads it into the bag, which is then laid on its side on the table. It is hardly necessary to remark that this is a somewhat difficult load, but, in Mr. Devant's hands, the introduction of the cage is quite imperceptible.

¹ As the spectators are not aware that the egg was really placed in the assistant's hand *before* he was asked to close it, the impression on their minds is that he wished for an egg, which was accordingly passed into his closed hand.

The performer continues as follows: "Now I want something to put in this bag to keep it upright upon the table. Any little thing will do. Perhaps, sir, you can lend me a pair of gloves, or a handkerchief. Thanks, I'll take both. I am only going to use them as a sort of paper-weight. Meanwhile, will you enjoy yourself by beating up the egg? I can see that you 're married; you do it so nicely. Don't drop it on your trousers, or you will get into trouble at home."

During the last few sentences the performer turns the bag up on end, drops the pair of gloves and handkerchief into it, and under pretence of arranging them, slips the elastic band off the cage (to which however it remains attached by means of the swivel), opens the little dish at top and takes out the two rings on the tip of the middle finger, which he bends so as to keep them concealed.

"Now, will any lady lend me a couple of wedding-rings. I *should* say one wedding ring and a kippèr—keeper I mean; or a couple of small dress rings will do, engagement-rings for instance; they come off easier, don't they? Thanks, madam. I will get you to place them on the tip of my finger, so that they never leave your sight for a single instant. Keep your eye on them, please. I am going to hand them to this gentleman. Will you kindly pull these rings off my finger, sir."

During the transit from the lender to his assistant he folds down the forefinger and extends the middle finger, as described at page 189. It is, therefore, the substitutes which the gentleman receives.

"Do you know the best way to clean rings, sir? The very best way is to drop them into beaten egg. Madam, would you like your rings cleaned? Yes, of course, you

would. Then drop them in, sir. You will understand, madam, that I am responsible for your rings, but this gentleman will pay for them in case of damage. Stir away, sir, these are stirring times. I think you have a little too much egg there; allow me to take a little of it away." [He pours out a portion into the second glass.] "Please see that I have n't taken the rings away. No! they are still there. Now I intend to pour the rings, which have never left your sight, madam, since I borrowed them, with the egg that covers them, into this paper bag. You *are* enjoying it, sir, are n't you? I always try to pour the egg on the handkerchief because it washes more easily. Dear, dear, it has all gone on the gloves, but never mind! Now I screw the top of the bag together, and pass this stick (the wand) through the paper, and I will ask you to hold the stick, sir, by each end."

Taking advantage of the fact that during a portion of this patter his back is naturally turned to the spectators, the performer slips the borrowed rings inside his vest and down the tube into the hidden envelope, from which he then withdraws the tube. When he has poured the egg with the dummy rings into the little receptacle at the top of the cage, and, gathering up the paper round it, forces the wand through the paper, he takes care that this shall also pass through the ring at top, so that not only the bag, but the cage, is suspended from it. He proceeds:

"Now I intend to hatch the egg. Look! Change!" He grasps the bag at bottom, and pulls it away with a downward jerk; the cage, now expanded to its full

¹ This is done to reduce the egg to such a quantity as can be completely accommodated in the little receptacle at the top of the cage.

height, remaining suspended from the wand, with the sealed envelope hanging from it. "The hen that laid that egg was evidently a canary; but it must have been a strong, wiry sort of bird, for it has hatched a cage as well as the egg. I see here, attached to the cage by a ribbon, is a sealed envelope. Will you please tear it off the ribbon, sir." This done, the performer places the cage (carrying it in the left hand) on the centre table, and while his back is turned for this purpose palms, in the right hand, the folded envelope from vest. The bag is left on the small round table. He then says to the gentleman who has been helping him, "Will you please tell us whether you think it possible to get the contents of that envelope out without tearing it or breaking the seals? You are quite sure it is n't? Very well, will you open it in the ordinary way and tell us what you find. A second envelope, also sealed? Will you please examine that just as carefully as you did the first."

To facilitate his doing so the performer, with the left hand, takes back the outside envelope, and transfers it, sealed side upwards, to the right hand, in which is concealed, folded in half, the envelope which really contains the borrowed rings. This he secretly opens out flat again under cover of the larger envelope, what would be the "address" side next the palm. He then returns both to the left hand.

"Now, sir, if you open that second envelope, I think you will find a third." (This is done.) "Please examine that also. You need n't open it" (he takes it back, and lays it, address side upwards, on the larger one in the left hand). "I shall ask the lady who so kindly lent me the rings to open this one herself, and see that her rings are actually in this sealed envelope."

Meanwhile" (picking up the paper bag and offering it), "here, sir, are your handkerchief and gloves uninjured. And here, madam, is the envelope containing your rings. They are your own, are they not? I think, ladies and gentlemen, you will all admit that this is really a Bag of Mystery."

The final "change" is one of the prettiest things in the trick. When the performer offers the gloves and handkerchief the paper bag for a moment passes in front of his left hand. During that moment the hand is turned over, thereby bringing the envelope just examined underneath, and the one containing the borrowed rings uppermost. The keenest eye cannot perceive the change, nor is the most acute spectator likely to suspect it.

With the last item I suspend, for the time being, my pleasant task. When a volume has overpassed its five hundred and fiftieth page, the author need scarcely apologize for not making it longer. And yet my work is but half done. Card, coin, and billiard-ball tricks, with many others little less important, still remain to be considered. These, as intimated in the preface, I propose to deal with in a further volume.

To my friendly readers in many lands, therefore, I say, not "farewell," but

AU REVOIR!



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